

A RELATIONAL APPROACH

TO

CHURCH OFFICER TRAINING

A Study Guide For

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

and

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America

by

Dwight Russell Blackstock

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Doctor of Ministry Degree

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This professional project, completed by

Dwight R. Blackstock

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty
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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee

Howard Clinebell
Ronald Osborn (in d.)
(Chairman)

March 25, 1980
Date

David Gough
Dean

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ABSTRACT

This project proposes an approach to the training of ruling elders and deacons within the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The approach which would also be useful to a candidate for ministry studying for denominational examinations in polity, provides a vehicle for understanding the Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

INTRODUCTION

"There is one call of God to all the people on the earth, to the whole church, and to every member of the church, to the ministry and mission of God's word and work in Jesus Christ. Those who hear and respond to this call through baptism and commissioning share in God's mission and become partners with God in that proclamation by which that call continues to be made known to men and women everywhere." (Book of Order 36.0])

These words echo a major tenet of reformed theology. "There is one call of God to all people on the earth", and that call is "to the mission and ministry of God's word and work in Jesus Christ." It is because the church from time to time needs to be reminded of this portion of our heritage, that this work originated. It is hoped that by its use, both pastors and laypeople will come to a greater understanding that we, in the United Presbyterian Church are in ministry together because each of us is called of God. This study is designed to make the polity of the church more readily understandable, thereby making pastors and laity more competent for our common ministry.

In the church today, there is a common misconception that ministry is primarily the responsibility of the pastor, who is supposed to minister to and for the congregation, but never with the congregation. This position, even if it is held unconsciously, relegates the congregation to passively watching

while ministry is done, and therefore a large portion of the body of Christ suffers a kind of paralysis.

One possible key to reversing this paralysis is to have church officers who are well trained and who understand that ministry in the reformed tradition is the responsibility of the whole church. One way to help church officers gain this understanding is to provide serious training in the polity of the church. "Presbyterians have always taken polity seriously because of its significance for theology. Faith cannot be separated from the form in which it expresses itself... The form of the church, for example, either encourages or discourages a person to exercise the responsibility of faith or to depend upon the church as an institution for decisions that should be personal responsibility. The priesthood of all believers therefore, is encouraged or discouraged by the form and shape of the church's life."¹ Presbyterian polity and theology, when properly understood, encourages all members of the church to assume personal responsibility for mission and ministry in the particular church, the denomination, and in the world.

This study is designed particularly for ruling elders and deacons, to provide some important directions for developing and understanding of how the concept of the priesthood of all believers is lived out in the life of the church. More than this, it is designed to give the elder and deacon a feeling for the essential nature of his or her own ministry. Both the new and the experienced church officer will find an increased appreciation of the integral part each one plays in

the ministry of the church.

This study guide is divided into several different units. The first unit is an introduction to the theology of the priesthood of all believers, and deals with some of the historical and theological foundations of this concept. The next five units deal in turn with various areas of church life - from the local church to the General Assembly. At the beginning of each unit there are relational exercises which will give the new officers an opportunity to learn new skills in team building and communications. The exercises have been designed so that those in the early units will call for very low levels of self-disclosure, and should not therefore be threatening to members of the group. As the study guide is utilized, the exercises allow for slightly more self-disclosure so that by the time a group has worked through each of the exercises, the members will already feel as if they are a part of a team, and will be prepared to share together in their common ministry.

In each case with the exception of the first unit, the relational exercises deal directly with the subject of the unit. The relational exercise for the first unit dealing with the priesthood of all believers is designed as an "ice breaker". It will provide the new officers with an opportunity to share a little bit of themselves with each other, and should set the tone for the remaining sessions.

Unit two is concerned with the role of deacons, elders, and sessions. The relational exercise "Games People Play" is designed to provide the proper setting to allow the new offi-

cers to explore how stereotypes may effect the assumptions they make about one another as well as the way they function as a team.

Unit three is concerned with the whole area of ministerial relations. The relational exercise provides an opportunity to explore and share those elements of the pastor's role which the officers see as being most essential. The exercise should prove to be a valuable tool to facilitate sharing between the pastor and those with whom the pastor will work most closely. By using this exercise, the pastor and officers will have a prime opportunity to share needs and expectations with each other.

Unit four is concerned with the church at worship. The relational exercise, "Active Remembering", will allow the new officers to reach back and touch a meaningful worship experience. The telling of these experiences and the feelings which surround them will allow both for sharing on a deep level, and reaffirming the importance of worship in our lives.

Unit five deals with judicatories about session level. The relational exercise for this unit will allow the officers to learn the value of coming to a consensus in the decision making process. The exercise has been designed in such a way as to provide the opportunity to discuss any frustrations that members of the group may have about decisions of the higher judicatories.

The sixth unit is concerned with the Church Universal, the United Presbyterian Church, and the Particular Church. The relational exercise is a directed fantasy which asks the

group to focus on the Particular Church. It provides the officers with the opportunity to dream about their church. The dreams they dream could become the basis for setting goals and objectives for the congregation.

Following the relational exercises, there are two more major sections of each unit. The first section consists of situational questions, which may be typical of real life situations which a church officer is likely to face in the discharge of his or her ministry. These questions provide two important learning experiences. The first is the opportunity to practice the communications skills which were learned in the relational exercises. The second is the opportunity to wrestle with both the spirit and the letter of the law as the "right" solution to the situation is sought. For those new to Presbyterian Polity, the tension between spirit and law may seem very strong. Yet those who understand our heritage see this tension as creative, and believe it has molded us into a Church which has a polity which is truly expressive of its faith.

The last section of each unit is composed of up to sixty questions with answers from the Book of Order. Each question and answer deals with the subject of the unit, and in each case more information is given than is needed to answer the situational question. These questions, along with the situational questions put the Book of Order into a specific context, and thus make it more understandable. The questions in the last section will enable the class to answer the situational questions from the previous section.

It should be emphasized that the material from the Book of Order has been edited. In all cases the answers are footnoted to facilitate easy reference to the Book of Order itself. The study guide should always be used in concert with the Book of Order and never as a substitute for it. When studying the Book of Order, it must always be kept in mind that it is a living document. Parts of the Book of Order are amended each year by the General Assembly in concert with several presbyteries. Though some of the sections may seem antiquated or of dubious usefulness, the Book of Order, at any given time represents the best collective wisdom of our denomination. It is the responsibility of each Presbyterian, to protect that which is good, while striving to improve the quality of those sections which need to be changed.

This study guide has been used in a variety of settings with both new and experienced church officers, and it is readily adaptable to both large and small groups. To maximize its benefits, larger groups should be broken down into smaller subgroups. This is especially necessary during the team building and communications exercises.

Once the group is an acceptable size to allow each one to participate fully, the group(s) should be given adequate time to complete the team building exercise. For the second section of each unit, each group should function as if it were a session. One person in each group should be appointed Moderator - in small training sessions this person might be the teacher or pastor. After the Moderator is appointed, the "session" should deal with as many of the situational questions

as desired. The group should deal with these questions by discussing them, and then proposing in the form of motions, specific actions that will facilitate a solution. During this process, no one should refer specifically to the Book of Order but each one should act on what he or she feels is appropriate.

Following this initial period of discussion, the groups should be given the opportunity of reading the questions and answers in the third section of the unit. It will be obvious which part of the material will deal with the questions the group chose to handle. By properly utilizing this third section, the group will be able to check its solutions against what the Constitution has to say on the subject. Where it is necessary, previous actions can be reconsidered, and new motions formulated which would be more in line with the provisions of the Book of Order. At this point, the group can use the Book of Order itself to see the full context of the portions which are quoted. This will help the new officers to begin feeling at home in what may otherwise be an impossible document.

This study can also be used by an individual working alone. The individual can read the situational questions and formulate what he or she considers to be an appropriate response. The response can then be checked by referring to the last section of each unit and to the Book of Order itself. Because of the situational nature of this study guide, this approach would be useful to the seminarian who is studying in preparation for the cooperative examination in polity.

UNIT ONE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMED CONCEPT
OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

THE SHIELD EXERCISE

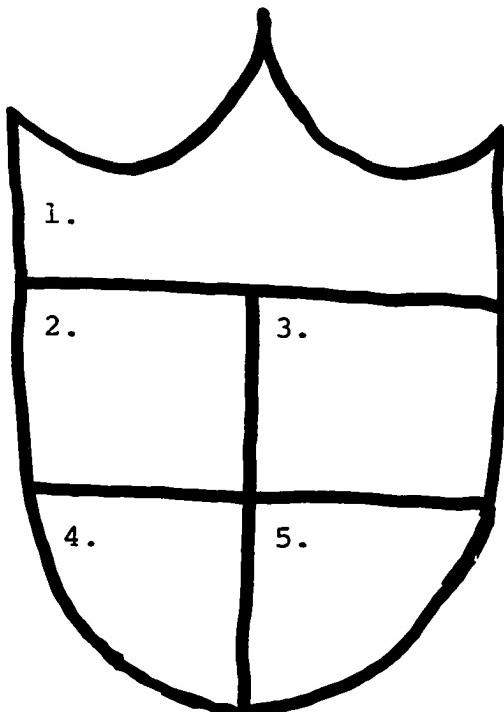
Goals: This exercise provides the group with an opportunity for sharing on a level of low risk to any individual. This exercise is good not only for groups of people who are well acquainted, but also for groups who have not previously had much meaningful interaction. It helps to build trust through low risk self disclosure.

Procedure: Each person should have a copy of the shield, or the leader could draw the shield on a blackboard for group members to copy. Each person should take up to ten minutes to provide the following information in the numbered space:

1. A personal epitaph. What would you like to be known for?
2. A memorable childhood experience.
3. Your most significant personal relationship.
4. Your most important religious experience.
5. One personal ambition or goal.

The information may be drawn in symbols (pictures) which can be shared with the entire group. If the group is large, temporary division small groups of 3-5 persons is desirable.

Remember: a good leader always participates and shares himself or herself with the group.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMED CONCEPT
OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

One important doctrine of the Christian faith which was renewed by the great leaders of the Reformation, is the concept of the "priesthood of all believers". Though this concept is often neglected in practice, it remains central to the life of those churches which belong to the Reformed and Presbyterian family. This doctrine teaches that all Christians have a personal responsibility for ministry in the church and in the world. It teaches that no one individual, clergy or lay, is more important than another, and that each one's ministry through the body of Christ is equally essential with the others. Paul Tillich in his Systematic Theology contends that the priesthood of all believers denies the hierarchical system and places emphases on different dimensions of the same reality. He believes that pastors and elders are in ministry together, and that ordination is to different dimensions of the same ministry.²

This concept, though clearly in line with the main body of Reformed theology, is often in conflict with the actual practice in some Reformed and Presbyterian congregations. It is not uncommon for a hierarchy of command to be established in a congregation which places the pastor in the position of highest honor and authority to be followed in turn by ruling elders, deacons, and then the non-ordained members of the congregation. In this practice, ordination is seen as bestowing

special honor and special gifts, as opposed to simply setting apart certain individuals for certain functions in the life of the church because of the gifts which God has already given.

Such thinking serves to polarize the clergy and laity, and makes it seem as if they are not irrevocably a part of each other. Even the words, "clergy" and "laity" have been misused in the Church to maintain an artificial separation. It is interesting to note that the word in the New Testament, "kleros" from which the English word clergy comes, refers not to a special order among Christians, but to all Christians. In the same way, the New Testament word "laos" from which we derive the English word "laity" refers not to a recipient part of the congregation, but to all Christians.³ "Ministry" is not used in the Bible to designate a special group within the church. J.A.T. Robinson asserts that "All that is said of the ministry in the New Testament is said not of individuals nor of some apostolic college of 'essential ministry' but to the whole body, whatever the differentiation within it."⁴ So the New Testament does not establish a special caste of clergy which assumes total responsibility for ministry. On the contrary, it seems to emphasize the importance of all Christians everywhere assuming personal responsibility for the corporate ministry of the Body of Christ.

If this concept is correct, then believers must begin to ask how and when the individual Christian received his or her commissioning to the Christian ministry. The Book of Order of the United Presbyterian Church presents what seems to be representative thinking on this matter. Under the general head-

ing, "Of Church Members and Their Ministry", it indicates that each person has been called by God for ministry. Those who would answer God's call to ministry do so through baptism and commissioning. This commissioning takes place as the believer joins the community of the faithful in a particular church.

Another writer expresses this same thought, "Baptism is not only an initiation into God's people, but also the basic commissioning into Christ's ministry. It is the fundamental call to Christian priesthood."⁵ Following this idea, we can see that in the Reformed tradition ordination does not bestow an objective "thing" to the ordinand, but the charisma which it gives should be viewed in the context of an existential relationship between the ordained and the church. This means that no ordained person holds the charisma he or she receives as an individual possession, but always in relationship to a particular community, in which the ordained person functions. This is why ordination is inseparable from the Eucharistic community and is given only within its context.⁶ Baptism then, is the sacrament of the priesthood, while ordination is merely the assignment of certain responsibilities of a public nature. Ordination allows individual believers to perform certain functions within the one ministry which belongs to all Christians by virtue of their baptism.

The theology of the priesthood of all believers was re-discovered and more fully developed during the reformation. The name Martin Luther is the one most often, and most prominently mentioned in the development of this concept. However, John Clavijn also accepted without qualification the theology

of the priesthood of all believers.⁷ The reformers often had to state their theology over against that of Rome. Martin Luther, writing in The Babylonian Captivity of the Church makes his point concerning the priesthood of all believers quite clearly. Speaking about the hierarchy in the Roman Church, he said, "If they were forced to grant that all of us that have been baptized are equally priests, as indeed we are..., they would know then that they have no right over us."⁸

Calvin wrote, "We also find what sacrifices Paul recommends to the Christian church: For, being reconciled to God through the one true sacrifice of Christ, we are all through his grace made priests in order that we may dedicate ourselves and all that we are to the glory of God."⁹ For Calvin, an important part of the concept of the priesthood of all believers was the opportunity of all Christians to have immediate access to God through Jesus Christ.

From the Biblical passages concerning the priesthood of all believers, Calvin drew several principles for Christian life. First, Christians are by their calling in Christ consecrated to God. The Christian is in turn called upon to dedicate his or her personality to God. To fulfill this, the believer will devote himself or herself, time, talents, property, - in short the believer's all - as a living sacrifice, in those areas in which the believer can best serve God. Christian praise, tangible care of neighbor, and prayer are all a part of one's priestly privilege, the offering of a surrendered life.¹⁰

It is true that Calvin held ordained ministry in the high-

est regard, yet no minister by virtue of ordination was to be considered spiritually superior to his colleagues, or to those among whom the specific ministry was carried on. For Calvin, there was no special virtue in becoming a minister. In fact, he thought it was possible that the minister might even be inferior in capacity to some of the members of the congregation. Even so, the minister was to be considered as the servant of God.¹¹

Calvin and Luther seem to be in basic agreement concerning the theology of the priesthood of all believers. However, Luther may have carried the concept a bit further. Calvin identified four orders or functions within the one ministry of the Body of Christ. Without implying any sort of hierarchy, from his study of scripture, Calvin identified pastors which were to have "responsibility for preaching the word, for administering the sacraments, for instructing, and along with the elders, for disciplining. Doctors were to be the teachers with responsibility for the 'instruction of the faithful in the true doctrine.' The Doctors, closest to the ministers, were the lecturers in theology,... The elders were to have with the pastors, oversight of everyone. The deacons were the Church's ministry of compassion, especially to the poor and sick."¹²

While Calvin left the administration of the sacraments exclusively in the hands of the pastors, Luther asserted, "Let everyone therefore who knows himself to be a Christian be assured of this and apply it to himself, that we are all priests and that there is no difference between us; that is to

say we have the same power in respect to word and sacraments. However, no one may make use of this power except by consent of the community, or the call of the Superior."¹³

One fundamental principle of Presbyterian theology which continues to be lived out in Presbyterian polity today, is the equality of clergy and laity in the church courts. We owe this principle to John Calvin "who emphatically opposed rule by individuals"¹⁴ and advocated church courts which provided for joint rule. Calvin also "opposed rule by ministers alone, and advocated courts that provided a way for preaching and ruling presbyters to rule together."¹⁵

This principle quickly appealed to other Reformed thinkers as a wise one. In 1547 an Oxford scholar, William Travers, published a treatise entitled, "A Full and Plain Declaration of Ecclesiastical Discipline." This treatise strongly asserted Presbyterian principles. Among other things it called for "tests to exclude unable ministers, the abolition of the prelacy, and the adoption of a church government by means of elected elders..."¹⁶ In 1584 yet another book was written on polity which plainly outlined the reformed concept of equality among elders. It stated, "In the consistory, the local governing council of elders and minister, the majority decides..."¹⁷

In England toward the end of the sixteenth century, adherents of Reformed theology began holding weekly meetings which were called "exercises" or "prophesying". These meetings were patterned after similar gatherings held both in Geneva and Scotland. In these meetings, ministers and qual-

ified laypersons held discussions on biblical themes. It is recorded that both ministers and elders addressed the group and led in the discussions.¹⁸ One historian has called these exercises "embryonic presbyteries."¹⁹ During these meetings, ministers and laypeople discussed the day's topic as equals.

In the Book of Confessions, which is the first part of the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church, we can get a glimpse of how the Reformed churches have dealt with the concept of the priesthood of all believers. In the earliest confessions, it is there almost by implication only, and it is not very fully developed.

In the Scots Confession, which was written in 1580, we find the idea of the priesthood of all believers in a rather rudimentary form in Chapter XIV under the heading, "The Works Which Are Counted Good Before God". In this chapter the confession says, "We confess and acknowledge that God has given to man his holy law, in which not only all such works as displease and offend his Godly majesty are forbidden, but also those which please him and which he has promised to regard are commanded. These are of two kinds. The one is done to the honor of God, the other to the profit of our neighbor, and both have the revealed word of God as their assurance." The individual Christian then has a personal responsibility for ministry which the confession defines as good works which honor God and benefit neighbors.

The Heidelberg Catechism written in 1563 takes a similar approach. In question 55 it asks, "What do you understand by

the communion of saints?" And it answers the question saying, "First that believers one and all, as partakers of the Lord Christ, and all his treasures and gifts, shall share in one fellowship. Second, that each one ought to know that he is obliged to use his gifts freely and with joy for the benefit and welfare of other members."

In this catechism there is the understanding that each one in the community of believers has been given a gift by Christ for the benefit of the whole Body of Christ. Such gifts are to be used freely, joyously, for the benefit of the other members of the community.

The Second Helvetic Confession written in 1566 is the only one which specifically mentions the priesthood of all believers. However, while it recognizes the personal responsibility of each believer, it draws a distinction between priesthood and ministry. It says, "To be sure, Christ's apostles call all who believe in Christ 'Priests', but not on account of an office, but because all the faithful having been made kings and priests, we are able to offer up spiritual sacrifices to Christ. (Ex 19:6; I Peter 2:0; Rev. 1:6) Therefore, the priesthood, as we have said is common to all Christians; not so the ministry." (5.153)

The main difference between priests and ministers is one of function. Teaching, preaching, and the administration of the sacraments are the exclusive responsibility of ministers. (5.154-5.155) Though the difference is one of function, the confession may also foster a "clergy/lay" class distinction. It tells us that "Not any one may be elected" as a minister

(5.150 "Even from the beginning of the world God has used the most excellent men in the whole world" to be his ministers.

(5.145)

Still the Second Helvetic confession recognizes the personal responsibility for "priesthood" among each individual believer. Referring to the faith which keeps us ever close to God, the confession states, "The same (faith) keeps us in the service we owe to God and neighbors, strengthens our patience in adversity, fashions and makes a true confession, and in a word, brings forth good fruit of all kinds, and good works. For we teach that truly good works grow out of a living faith... and are done by the faithful according to the will or rule of God's word." (5.114-5.115) It says further, "We know that man was not created or regenerated through faith in order to be idle, but rather that without ceasing he should do those things which are good and useful." (5.118) So, while there is a difference between priesthood and ministry, the confession does have a well developed concept of the necessity for each individual believer to participate in Christian service. Further, since certain functions are reserved within the Church for "ministers", it seems reasonable to assume that the "good works" were to be carried out in service not only to the church but to the world. So here we have the idea of the "church gathered and the church dispersed."

Arthur C. Cochrane, in a theological critique of the Reformed confessions of the 16th and 17th century which are found in the Book of Confessions sees the dichotomy between clergy and laity, between ministry and priesthood, to be an

almost fatal flaw. Referring the concept of the call which is implicit in the theology of the priesthood of all believers, he says, "...they were correct in interpreting this as a participation in the benefits of his death and resurrection, namely; reconciliation, justification, and sanctification. But that is only one side of the goal of calling. To be a Christian is to be called to serve, to mission, to be sent into the world, to be a witness, to take up one's cross and to suffer for Christ, to confess by word and deed, by one's whole existence, what Christ has done, does and will do for all; in short, to be called to be a minister of God's word and deed."²⁰

In the Book of Confessions, the "Theological Declaration of Barmen" and the "Confession of 1967" seem the closest to agreeing with Cochrane's understanding. The Barmen Declaration was written in 1934 in response to the usurpation of the church government by "the ruling party of 'German Christians' and the Church administration by them."²¹ It asserts that God has a claim upon the whole life of the believer and the Church. "As Jesus Christ is God's assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins, so in the same way and with the same seriousness he is God's mighty claim upon our whole life. Through him befalls us a joyful deliverance from the godless fetters of this world for a free, grateful service to his creatures.

(8.14)

This "grateful service" which the Church is to render to God's creatures is to be carried out in the world. It is carried out in faithful obedience to the command of Christ. "As

the Church of pardoned sinners, it has to testify in the midst of a sinful world with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that is solely his property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance."

(8.17)

Further, this witness, and service to God's world is not to be exclusively in the possession of those who hold office in the Church. The witness is not the province of bishops, or ministers, or elders alone, but rather it belongs to the whole believing community, and should be exercised by the individual Christian who is a part of that community. "The various offices in the church do not establish a dominion of some over the others; on the contrary, they are for the exercise of the ministry entrusted to and enjoined upon the whole congregation." (8.20)

In the "Theological Declaration of Barmen" we can clearly see the concept of the priesthood of all believers. It allows for various offices in the church, but there is no hint that any of these offices carries any special honor or authority. In fact, quite to the contrary, the various offices clearly do not establish dominion of one over another. The various offices are established to facilitate the one ministry of the whole people of God.

Though the phrase "priesthood of all believers" is not found in the "Confession of 1967" the concept is more clearly explicated here than in any of the other confessions. The "Confession of 1967" understands that wherever the individual

believer happens to be, he or she carries the ministry of the Church there as well. It recognizes that the believer lives for the sake of Christ's own mission. "Wherever the Church exists, its members are both gathered in corporate life and dispersed in society for the sake of mission in the world." (9.35)

The Church will gather from time to time for the upbuilding of its corporate life and for the nurture of the individual believer and then, "The Church disperses to serve God wherever its members are, at work or play, in private life or in society... Their daily action in the world is the Church in mission to the world." (9.37) The concept of the ministry of individual believers has moved from the idea of good works in the earlier confessions to the now matured acknowledgement that each Christian is called of Christ for mission in the Church and in the world.

The "Confession of 1967" also acknowledges that each believer has been equipped for his or her ministry by the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Each member is the Church in the world endowed by the Spirit with some gift of ministry and is responsible for the integrity of his witness in his own particular situation. He is entitled to the guidance and support of the Christian community... He in turn in his own competence, helps to guide the church." (9.38)

The Confession also understands that within the ministry of the Church there are certain tasks or functions which require special training or competence. "In recognition of special gifts of the Spirit and for the ordering of its

life as a community the Church calls, trains, and authorizes certain members for leadership and oversight. The persons qualified for these duties in accordance with the polity of the Church are set apart by ordination... and thus made responsible for their special ministries." (9.39)

So the Confession recognizes that certain believers have special talents for particular functions within the ministry. These persons, when qualified, are then set apart by ordination to perform these various functions. But ordination does not confer any special gift, or any special talent. Rather, ordination occurs after the community has recognized the gifts which the believer has already been given and has already begun to develop. Ordination to certain functions aids in the ordering of church life, but does not carry with it any special honor, and those who are ordained do not assume the responsibility of other believers for ministry. "Presbyterian polity recognizes the responsibility of all members for ministry." (9.40)

This recognition that ministry is the responsibility of all is clearly understood in the Book of Order, which emphasizes the one ministry of Jesus Christ in which all are called to participate. It very carefully does not draw a sharp distinction between the various kinds of ordained ministry within the Church. The ordination questions for pastors, elders, and deacons are the same with the exception of one question. In the same way the duties of the various office holders, if not the same, are certainly inseparable from one another. The quality of clergy and laity is mandated on the judicator-

ies above the level of session.

It is hoped that this study will help both pastors and laypersons to understand that we are a part of a theological tradition which emphasizes the unity of ministry. In the Reformed tradition, the ministry is a team ministry and each member bears responsibility for that ministry. This knowledge can give new freedom to pastors and to lay persons. Pastors can find freedom from the overwhelming responsibility of ministering alone, and laypeople can find the freedom to insist on their rightful equal station in the ministry of Jesus Christ. It is with this understanding that we can now begin to look seriously at the Directory for the Worship of God and Form of Government to see how this theology is put to work in the ordering of our corporate lives.

UNIT TWO: DEACONS, RULING ELDERS, AND SESSIONS

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Goal: To help the officers understand how easily we stereotype each other, or put people in categories, on the basis of extremely limited factual knowledge.

Procedure: Listed below are several beliefs, positions, or personal attributes. Assume that a friend is going to introduce you to someone about whom you have been told only that he or she accepts the Bible as the literal infallible word of God. Check off on the following list the other characteristics or beliefs you think would apply to this individual.

- a. General Assembly statements supporting civil rights legislation. _____ supports _____ opposes
- b. Ordination of women as ruling elders and clergy. _____ supports _____ opposes
- c. Democrat _____ Republican _____
- d. College-education _____ High School Education _____
- e. General Assembly statements supporting busing for integration. _____ supports _____ opposes
- f. Liberal _____ Conservative _____
- g. Prosecution of victimless crimes. _____ supports _____ opposes
- h. Empowerment of ethnic minorities in church and society. _____ supports _____ opposes
- i. Open housing. _____ supports _____ opposes
- j. Gun control legislation. _____ supports _____ opposes
- k. Bi-lingual education in public schools. _____ supports _____ opposes
- l. Women belong in the home. _____ yes _____ no

Have the group take ten minutes to complete the list and then spend 15-20 minutes discussing the differences and similarities in their assumptions. Discuss the extent to which you believe that there are characteristics or beliefs which go together. How do our assumptions help or hinder good communications.

(modified from Managing for Organizational Effectiveness: An Experiential Approach, by Finch, Fredrick E., et al., McGraw Hill, 1976)

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

These questions should be used as if they had actually come up during a session meeting. The members of the group should discuss them thoroughly, using their own knowledge. After the discussion has progressed, reference can be made to the questions and answers at the back of this unit which will help the officers to clear what the Book of Order says about these and other related questions.

1. You are a member of session, and during the meeting there has been a discussion about what time church school classes ought to be held. The members of the Christian education committee have recommended that the church school classes be held at the same time as the morning worship services. Other ruling elders feel that the classes should be held at a time which would allow teachers an opportunity to worship. Which provision(s) of the Book of Order could give the session some guidance in making a decision on the Christian education committee's recommendation? What should the session do?
2. The worship committee of First Presbyterian Church has been doing a fine job. You, as a session member, have heard by the grapevine that they intend to bring a recommendation to the next session meeting listing the scripture readings and sermon titles that the pastor should use for the next three months. What are some of the important implications of this recommendation: What authority does the session have in planning for the public worship of God? Are there areas of responsibility specifically reserved for the pastor?
3. Martha Jones, a pillar of Covenant Presbyterian Church, died and left the church \$10,000 in her will. She did not designate how the money was to be spent. A dispute has been growing between the session and the board of trustees over the use of the funds. The trustees want to use the money to paint the sanctuary and repair some holes in the parking lot. The session wants to use the money to bolster the church's sagging benevolence budget. Some of the trustees feel that the matter ought to be put to a congregational vote. Who has jurisdiction in this matter? How should the session handle this situation. What are some possible consequences of the several approaches the session can take?
4. Mr. and Mrs. Klotz recently had a conversion experience and joined your church. The Klotzes have three children, none of whom have had any religious training. However, their son Tom who is in the Navy and stationed in the South Pacific, decides that he too would like to join your church. The problem is that he will not be home for eighteen months. Is it possible for the session to receive him in-absentia? If your answer is no, explain

your reason. If your answer is yes, what would be the procedure for such an action?

5. Mrs. Jenkins is a dear old saint in the church. She has been the church treasurer for twenty-two years. For the last few years she has been counting the church offering by herself and making all of the necessary transactions without any help. Last week, when the quarterly statements of contributions went out, Mr. Smith claimed that he had given, in cash, one hundred dollars more than his statement showed. Now Mrs. Jenkins is quite upset because she feels that her integrity has been questioned. What steps, relative to church treasurers are mandated in the Book of Order which could have prevented this unfortunate situation?
6. Your church session is considering recommending to the congregation that it elect a board of deacons. Since there has not been a board of deacons in your congregation for some time, there is confusion about what the deacons should do. You have been asked to serve on a task force to write a tentative job description for the board of deacons. According to the Book of Order, what tasks might be appropriate for the deacons? How could your session and board of deacons work together more effectively in your common ministry?
7. At the annual congregational meeting, as nominations were being made for ruling elders, Dorothy Ames, the minister's wife, was nominated from the floor. Quite a discussion ensued about whether or not it was proper for the minister's wife to serve on session. What are the constitutional provisions regarding the electing of ruling elders? How do these provisions relate to the congregation's discussions? How would you feel about your pastor's spouse serving on session?
8. The members of your church are disenchanted by some of the recent decisions of the General Assembly. There is even talk of pulling out of the denomination. Some of the members of session decide that it would be politically advisable to stop paying into the General Mission budget of the General Assembly. These persons have heard of the "Fly by Night Mission Near the Harbor", and think that it would be a fine Christian gesture to give the church's benevolence there. Does the Book of Order offer any guidelines to sessions as they set their benevolence budgets? As a conscientious elder who believes in the Presbyterian system, how would you handle this situation?

REFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. WHAT STANDARD SHOULD WE USE IN ELECTING RULING ELDERS?

Ruling elders should be:

- a. Sound in the faith
- b. Blameless in life
- c. Wise and discrete
- d. Examples to the flock (39.03)

2. IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO ELECT WOMEN OR MINORITIES OR YOUNG PEOPLE AS RULING ELDERS?

Ruling elders shall be elected without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, or age. (39.03)

3. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF RULING ELDERS?

- a. Oversight of spiritual interests of the particular church and of the Church generally.
- b. Visiting people in their homes - especially the sick.
- c. Instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard children.
- d. All duties which private Christians are bound to discharge.
- e. Pray for the people.
- f. Seek the fruit of the preached word among the flock.
- g. To inform the pastor of all situations needing special attention.
- h. Teaching the Bible. (39.04)

4. WHAT PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ARE REQUIRED OF PERSONS WHO ARE ELECTED DEACONS?

They should be persons of spiritual mind, exemplary life, friendly spirit, and sound judgment. (40.02)

5. DOES THE BOOK OF ORDER REFER TO THE OFFICE OF "DEACONESS"?

No such designation is necessary since the office of deacon is open to all persons regardless of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status or age. (40.02)

6. MUST EVERY CHURCH HAVE A BOARD OF DEACONS?

No. A congregation which so desires may constitute a board of deacons. (40.03)

7. WHAT CONSTITUTES A QUORUM OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS?

Three members, if there are that many, shall constitute a quorum. If the board numbers nine or more, one-third shall constitute a quorum. (40.04)

8. IN CASE OF A DISPUTE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF A CHURCH'S STAFF,
WHO HAS ORIGINAL JURISDICTION?

Each staff person has a right to a personal hearing on personnel matters relating to them, such hearing to be before the session's designated committee or before the session as a committee of the whole. (41.09)

9. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS?

The deacons shall assume whatever responsibilities the session shall delegate, possibly including the following:

- a. Ministering to those in need, the sick, the friendless, to those in distress.
 - b. Development of the grace of liberality in the congregation.
 - c. Divising effective ways of collecting gifts.
 - d. Responsibilities in the area of property and finance.
 - e. Evangelistic, missionary, and education programs
- (40.04)

10. IS THE MODERATOR OF DEACONS ALWAYS THE PASTOR?

The moderator of deacons can, with consent of the pastor and appointment by session, be another minister named to membership on the board. Additionally, the session may authorize the deacons to elect one of its own members as moderator. (40.06)

11. WHAT IS A SESSION?

A session of a particular church consists of the pastor (or co-pastors) and the ruling elders in active service. (41.01)

12. WHAT CONSTITUTES A QUORUM OF SESSION?

Two ruling elders with the pastor are necessary to constitute a quorum. If the active ruling elders number nine or more, then one-third with the pastor shall constitute a quorum. (41.02)

13. ASIDE FROM THE PASTOR, WHO MAY MODERATE THE SESSION?

- a. Another minister from the same presbytery upon invitation.
- b. In case of sickness or absence of the pastor, the session, with the pastor's approval, may elect one of its own members to preside, except in judicial cases. (41.03)

14. THE SESSION IS CHARGED WITH MAINTAINING THE SPIRITUAL GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION. WHAT POWERS HAS IT BEEN GIVEN TO ACCOMPLISH THIS TASK?

There are several specific powers:

- a. To inquire into the Christian knowledge and conduct of members.
- b. To call offenders and witnesses before it.
- c. To counsel parents regarding baptism.
- d. To decide who shall be baptized and instruct the congregation accordingly.
- e. To make sure the baptized persons are sustained and instructed in the faith by the whole congregation.
- f. To permit baptized children to receive the Lord's Supper.
- g. To decide who shall be members of the church.
- h. To receive new members.
- i. To grant Certificates of Transfer to other churches.
- j. To rebuke, exclude temporarily from exercise of ordained office, and to remove from ordained office, persons in need of censure.
- k. To concert the best measure for promoting the spiritual interest of congregations.
- l. To supervise Church School, deacons, trustees and other church boards.
- m. To examine, ordain, install elders and deacons elected by the congregation.
- n. Appoint representatives to higher judicatories.
(41.06)

15. WHO REVIEWS THE PASTOR'S SALARY?

The session shall carry out an annual review of the adequacy of the pastor's salary. (41.06)

16. WHO MUST APPROVE THE PASTOR'S SALARY?

The congregation and the presbytery must approve any changes in the pastor's call. (41.06)

17. WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY OVER THE CONGREGATION'S WORSHIP?

Excluding those things which are the exclusive province of the pastor (38.04), the Session has authority over worship. (41.07)

18. DOES THE CONGREGATION HAVE TO VOTE TO ALLOW PERSONS OR GROUPS TO USE CHURCH FACILITIES?

No. Session has exclusive authority over all church property. (41.07)

19. CAN SESSION DELEGATE ITS AUTHORITY IN PROPERTY AND FINANCIAL MATTERS?

Yes. These responsibilities can be temporarily delegated to a board of trustees or board of deacons. (41.08)

20. IS IT TRUE THAT AN ELDER OR DEACON IS ONLY ONE AS LONG AS HE OR SHE IS IN ACTIVE SERVICE?

No. The offices of ruling elder and deacon are perpetual and no one can lay aside either office at pleasure or be divested thereof except by removal from office. (47.02)

21. WHEN DOES THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR A RULING ELDER OR DEACON EXPIRE?

The term of office of a ruling elder or deacon expires when a successor has been installed into the office. (47.06)

22. IS IT PROPER TO HAVE WORSHIP AND CHURCH SCHOOL AT THE SAME HOUR?

No. Church School activities are not to interfere with the regular public worship of God on the Lord's Day, or parental instruction. (41.17)

23. IS THERE A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT A RULING ELDER CAN BE A DELEGATE FROM SESSION TO PRESBYTERY?

Ruling elders shall not serve for consecutive terms either full or partial aggregating more than three years. (42.04)

24. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SESSION AND DEACONS (or any other board) HAVE A MAJOR DISPUTE?

It shall be incumbent upon each (board) to consider the views of the other with care and respect, endeavoring to arrive at a conclusion agreeable to both. If they are unable to agree, the session having superior authority, shall prevail. (41.10)

25. CAN THE SESSION BUDGET ITS MONIES WITHOUT REGARD TO DENOMINATIONAL POLICY?

The session shall authorize such offerings for purposes of benevolence as it deems wise, with due regard to benevolence budgets and policies recommended by higher judicatories. (41.11)

26. WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM STANDARDS TO BE OBSERVED BY CHURCH TREASURERS AND OTHERS HANDLING CHURCH FUNDS?

- a. Counting and recording all offerings by at least two duly appointed persons.
- b. Keeping adequate books to reflect all financial transactions. Such books are open to inspection by church officers.

27. DOES ANYONE CHECK SESSION RECORDS?

Each session shall keep accurate records of its proceedings which shall be submitted to the presbytery at least once a year. (41.13)

28. WHAT TYPES OF ROLLS SHALL THE SESSION MAINTAIN?

- a. Active member roll
- b. Inactive member roll
- c. Affiliate member roll (41.14)

29. BESIDE THE VARIOUS MEMBER ROLLS, WHAT TYPE OF REGISTERS MUST THE SESSION MAINTAIN?

- a. Marriages
- b. Baptisms
- c. Ruling Elders
- d. Deacons (41.14)

30. CAN A SESSION BE RELIEVED OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES?

After a thorough investigation, when it is deemed wise, because the session of a particular church is unable or unwilling to manage the affairs wisely, presbytery may appoint a commission composed of ministers and ruling elders, with the full power of session. (41.15)

31. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM LENGTH OF ACTIVE SERVICE FOR RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS?

Ruling elders and deacons are normally elected for three-year terms. No ruling elder or deacon can serve for more than an aggregate of six years. After serving for six years, a ruling elder or deacon may return to active service only after having one year off. (47.011)

32. IS THERE A WAY IN WHICH ARMED SERVICE PERSONNEL STATIONED AWAY FROM HOME AND UNABLE TO BE PRESENT, CAN JOIN A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

Yes. Such persons and their dependents may be received in absentia by the session into church membership, upon a receipt of certification by a chaplain of this church, or one in correspondence with the General Assembly, that they have received instruction and have been baptized on confession of faith in a service of corporate worship. (20.05)

33. IS IT PROPER TO CONFER ORDINATION ON PERSONS, AS MINISTERS, RULING ELDERS, OR DEACONS, SIMPLY AS A RECOGNITION OF THEIR FINE PAST PERFORMANCES?

No. Each of these offices is a special charge, and no person shall be ordained unless it be to the performance of a definite work. (46.03)

UNIT THREE: ALL ABOUT MINISTERIAL RELATIONS:
LAY PREACHERS, CANDIDATES, LICENTIATES, AND PASTORS

THE PASTOR'S ROLE

Goal: To give the new officers an opportunity to objectify some of their thoughts and feelings in relation to the pastor's role in the church, and to see the tremendous variety of expectations which the pastor must attempt to satisfy.

Procedure: Divide the group into triads and give each triad a large sheet of paper and a felt tipped pen. Ask each group to develop a written job description for the pastor of your church. Ask them to be specific and to prioritize each item in the job description. Have them include the number of hours per week/month which should be devoted to each task.

Allow fifteen to twenty minutes for each triad to complete its task and then reassemble into the larger group. Place each job description so that the entire group can read it and discuss the differences and similarities.

Notice which items have been left out of the job descriptions as well as the number of hours per week/month which the pastor is expected to work. Are the job descriptions realistic? How do the groups' expectations compare with the pastors' expectations? What role must the church officer play to help the pastor achieve high priority items? Is there a need for the pastor and session to have a continuing dialogue concerning the pastor's role in the ministry of the church?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

The following questions relate to a variety of situations which may occur in the life of a local church, and many of these kinds of questions arise from time to time on the floor of presbytery. This is the longest unit in our course of study. Though it may prove tedious to some, each of the questions and answers from the Book of Order should be studied by the members of the class. The whole area of Ministerial Relations is one of the most important in our Church's life.

1. Sharon Gallagher is considering ministry as a profession. She is not too clear about what would be required of her according to the Book of Order, and she has come to the session for guidance. What should the session tell her about the reasons for coming under the care of presbytery? What are the trials for ordination? What limitations are placed on a candidate's service in the church?

2. The pastor of your church has recently been elected to the ministerial relations committee of presbytery. This is a big responsibility, and because of the work load, your pastor has had less time to spend visiting with church members. This has caused a real furor in the congregation, and some people feel that the pastor's activities should be confined to the local church. As a person who is knowledgeable about our church's government, what is your reaction to this situation? Which provisions of the Book of Order support your position?
3. You are a ruling elder who has taken the responsibility of that office seriously, and as a result you have been elected to serve on presbytery's committee of ministerial relations. At your first meeting, the Rev. Diane Smith, former pastor of the Eastminster Presbyterian Church, and currently without a call, explains that she has received an invitation to serve as pastor of a local United Church of Christ congregation. A discussion begins concerning whether or not a pastor of the Church may serve in a church of another denomination. What provisions in the Book of Order apply to Presbyterian ministers serving in other denominations? Are the provisions different for churches in correspondence with the General Assembly, and those not in correspondence? Explain.
4. The pastor of your church recently accepted another call. A pastor seeking committee was formed to nominate a new pastor. The committee was composed of nine of the most knowledgeable and well respected men in the church. Is this a legal committee? According to the Book of Order what should be the composition of a pastor seeking committee?
5. Six months ago, the Rev. Bill Smyth was invited to be the assistant pastor of the Presbyterian Church of the Tall Steeple. He has done such a good job that there is now a discussion about calling a congregational meeting to call Bill as an associate pastor. What is the difference between an assistant and an associate pastor? How long must one be an assistant pastor before that relationship can be changed to associate pastor? How is an associate pastoral relationship established?
6. You are on the pastor nominating committee of your church, and have just read the dossier of the Rev. John Green. He was recommended by your presbytery's ministerial relations committee. After reading his dossier, you find him to be an exciting candidate. Others on your committee are equally excited, but some members of the committee feel there is a problem. Mr. Green is divorced. Can your committee decide on that basis not to interview Mr. Green? Explain the constitutional provisions on Equal Employment Opportunity.

R E F E R E N C E Q U E S T I O N S

1. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE NAMES WHICH EXPRESS THE DUTIES OF A PASTOR?
 - a. Bishop - as one with oversight of the flock.
 - b. Pastor - one who feeds spiritual food.
 - c. Minister - as a servant of Christ.
 - d. Presbyter - as an example and one who governs.
 - e. Ambassador - one who declares the will of God.
 - f. Steward of the Mysteries of God - one who dispenses the ordinances of God. (38.02)
2. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF A PASTOR?
 - a. To offer prayers for the congregation.
 - b. Reading, teaching, expounding, and preaching the word.
 - c. To cultivate congregational singing.
 - d. To administer the sacraments.
 - e. To instruct children and youth and lead the educational program.
 - f. To visit people - especially the sick, afflicted, and dying.
 - g. To govern with the elders. (38.03)
3. WHICH OF THE PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE SESSION?
 - a. Selection of hymns to be sung.
 - b. The selection of the Scriptures to be read.
 - c. Leading the people in prayer.
 - d. Preparation and preaching of the sermon. (38.04)
4. DO MINISTERS KEEP A RECORD OF ALL THE COUPLES THEY UNITE IN MARRIAGE?

Yes. Ministers must keep a proper register of all those at whose marriages they officiate. (38.06)
5. IS IT TRUE THAT ALL PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS MUST PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF THE PRESBYTERY?

Yes. All continuing members of presbytery shall participate in the work and deliberations of the presbytery. (38.10)
6. WHY DO WE REQUIRE PROSPECTIVE MINISTERS TO COME UNDER CARE OF PRESBYTERY?

The scriptures require that some personal knowledge be had of persons who are to be ordained into the gospel ministry. This assures that this sacred office will be committed to strong and worthy persons. Bringing candidates under care gives the church a chance to form a better judgment. (48.01)

7. MUST A CANDIDATE FOR MINISTRY BE A MEMBER OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

A candidate shall be a member of a particular church under the jurisdiction of presbytery for at least six months. (48.03)

8. ONCE TAKEN UNDER THE CARE OF PRESBYTERY, MAY A CANDIDATE PERFORM MARRIAGES, ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS, OR MODERATE A SESSION?

No. Under no circumstances is the candidate authorized to moderate a session, to administer the sacraments, or perform a marriage. (48.06)

9. WHY DOES THE PRESBYTERY HAVE OVERSIGHT OF CANDIDATES FOR THE GOSPEL MINISTRY?

The primary concern of the presbytery in having oversight of the candidate's training, is for a balance of training appropriate to the candidate's occupational goal. (48.06)

10. WHAT TOOL DOES THE PRESBYTERY EMPLOY IN CARING FOR THE CANDIDATE?

In order to pursue its responsibility fully, the presbytery shall provide for an annual consultation with the candidate concerning his or her studies and relationship with the church. (48.07)

11. WHAT SHOULD BE THE CONTENT OF THE ANNUAL CONSULTATION WITH THE CANDIDATE?

- a. In the years prior to seminary, it shall center on the candidate's preparation for seminary and on her or his personal growth.
- b. In the first year of seminary, on his or her experience and its implications for professional ministry.
- c. The second year is similar to the first except that it shall include his or her progress toward ordination including a review of all grades and field education reports. (48.07)

12. MUST A CANDIDATE ALWAYS RETURN HOME FOR THE ANNUAL CONSULTATION?

No. When a candidate is far removed from his or her own presbytery, the Candidates Committee may designate the Committee of another presbytery or another representative to act as its agent. (48.08)

13. HOW LONG MUST A CANDIDATE BE UNDER CARE OF PRESBYTERY BEFORE HIS OR HER ORDINATION?

A minimum of one year. (49.01)

14. WHAT ARE THE FIVE TRIALS FOR ORDINATION?

- a. Transcripts from a regionally accredited college or university.
 - b. Transcripts from an approved seminary showing satisfactory grades in Biblical studies, exegesis of Old and New Testaments, dogmatic and practical theology and ecclesiastical history.
 - c. Certificates of satisfactory grades together with exam papers in areas covered by presbyteries cooperative examination.
 - d. A sermon with exegetical notes and a statement of faith.
 - e. Appearance before the appropriate committee which shall satisfy itself of the candidates readiness for ordination.
- (49.02 - 49.025)

15. WHAT AREAS DO THE PRESBYTERY COOPERATIVE EXAMINATIONS COVER?

- a. Content of English Bible
- b. Polity and program of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.
- c. Theological capability
- d. Worship
- e. Open Book Bible Exegesis (49.023)

16. IN THE FINAL APPEARANCE BEFORE THE CANDIDATES COMMITTEE, WHAT AREAS OF INQUIRY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EXAMINATION?

- a. Discussion with the candidate of the results of the trials thus far.
- b. The candidate's plans for continuing study and growth.
- c. The acceptability of the candidate's views with the confessional standards of the church.
- d. The candidate's understanding of the ordination vows.
- e. The candidate's commitment to the professional ministry within the discipline of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (49.02)

17. ASIDE FROM THE ORDINATION VOWS, MUST THE CANDIDATE SUBSCRIBE TO ANYTHING ELSE?

The presbytery shall cause to be transcribed at some convenient place in its records the obligation required of all ministers at the ordination in the following form:

"I do sincerely receive and subscribe to the above obligations as a just and true exhibition of my faith and principles, and do resolve and promise to exercise my ministry in conformity there unto." (49.05)

18. WHAT IS A LICENTIATE?

A licentiate is a candidate who has completed preparation for the professional ministry and the trials for ordination (except that he or she has not received a call), who then takes the same vows as a person being ordained. The only difference in the vows is the question, "will you seek to work as a licensed preacher with energy, intelligence, imagination and love?" (49.07 and 49.078)

19. MUST A LICENTIATE SUBMIT TO FURTHER EXAMINATION BY THE PRESBYTERY UPON RECEIVING A CALL?

No. When a licentiate receives a call approved by his or her presbytery, he or she shall be ordained without further examination. (49.09)

20. HOW LONG DOES A LICENSE TO PREACH REMAIN VALID?

The license to preach the gospel shall expire at the end of four years, but the presbytery may, if it thinks proper, renew it for the period of one year. (49.09)

21. WHAT FACTORS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN A CONGREGATION ELECTS A PASTOR-SEEKING COMMITTEE?

Such a committee shall be fairly representative of all constituents of the church, including all age groups, male and female representatives, and persons from any ethnic minorities. (50.01)

22. HOW SHOULD A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING BE CALLED TO ELECT A PASTOR-SEEKING COMMITTEE?

Session shall call a congregational meeting to convene at the regular place of worship. Public notice of the time, place, and purpose shall be given at least one week prior to the appointed time. (50.01)

23. UNDER OUR CONSTITUTION, CAN A CONGREGATION STIPULATE THAT IT WILL ONLY CONSIDER WHITE MALE CANDIDATES FOR PASTOR?

No. Care must be taken to consider candidates without prejudicial regard to race, ethnic origins, sex, marital status, or age. (50.01)

24. IS IT POSSIBLE TO CALL AN ASSISTANT PASTOR TO BE THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR?

Yes. When an assistant pastor has been in a church for

at least one year. In such case, session, serving as the nominating committee, in consultation with the Ministerial Relations Committee, may nominate the assistant as associate at a called congregational meeting or at the annual meeting when proper notice has been given.
(50.01)

25. WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN A MINISTER AND A CHURCH?

A minister may serve a church as a pastor, associate pastor, assistant pastor, stated supply, or temporary supply. (50.01)

26. WHO CALLS A PASTOR OR AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR?

A pastor or associate pastor is elected by the congregation. (50.01)

27. DOES AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR HAVE TO RESIGN WHEN THE SENIOR PASTOR LEAVES?

No. The status of an associate pastor is not affected by the death or resignation of the pastor. (50.01)

28. HOW IS A PASTORAL OR ASSOCIATE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP ESTABLISHED?

The relation of pastor or associate pastor is established by installation, an act of presbytery. (50.01)

29. IS AN ASSISTANT PASTOR CALLED IN THE SAME MANNER AS AN ASSOCIATE?

No. An assistant pastor is nominated by the pastor and invited by the pastor and session. The relation shall be established between the assistant pastor, the session (as distinct from the congregation) and the presbytery by installation. (50.01)

30. WHAT IS A PARISH ASSOCIATE?

A parish associate is a minister who serves in some valid ministry other than the local parish, but wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches in keeping with ordination to the ministry of word and sacrament. (50.012)

31. HOW IS A PARISH ASSOCIATE RELATED TO A CONGREGATION?

The relation shall be established, upon nomination by the pastor, between the parish associate, the session, and the presbytery. (50.012)

32. WHAT IS A STATED SUPPLY?

A stated supply is a minister appointed by presbytery after consultation with session, to perform specified pastoral functions in a church without a pastor. (50.012)

33. WHAT IS THE NORMAL MAXIMUM LENGTH OF TIME FOR A STATED SUPPLY TO REMAIN IN A CHURCH?

The stated supply relationship shall extend for a period not to exceed twelve months at a time. (50.012)

34. WHAT IS AN INTERIM PASTOR?

An interim pastor is a minister chosen by the session under the guidance of the Ministerial Relations Committee, who is approved by presbytery to provide continuity in pastoral leadership of a church during the period it is without an installed pastor.

35. MUST A TEMPORARY SUPPLY BE A MINISTER?

No. A temporary supply may be a minister, a licentiate, a candidate, or, in cases of emergency, a ruling elder secured by the session.... (50.012)

36. MAY ORDAINED MINISTERS OF CHURCHES IN CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BE EMPLOYED IN A STAFF RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT PRESBYTERY APPROVAL?

Such a person may be employed as an occasional supply. A more permanent relationship requires presbytery approval. (50.012)

37. MUST A CONGREGATION CONCUR UNANIMOUSLY IN THE CALLING OF A PASTOR?

No. A simple majority is all that is required. However, if a large minority is opposed the moderator may attempt to dissuade the majority from prosecuting the call. (50.04)

38. WHO PRESENTS THE PASTOR'S CALL TO THE PRESBYTERY?

One or more commissioners shall be appointed by the church to present and prosecute the call before their presbytery. (50.07)

39. HOW CAN A CONGREGATION REMOVE AN INSTALLED PASTOR FROM HIS OR HER POSITION?

- a. Commissioners shall present their grounds for removal to the presbytery.
- b. After all parties are heard, the presbytery will or will not concur. (50.09)

40. WHAT OBLIGATIONS DOES A CONGREGATION ASSUME WHEN IT CALLS A PASTOR?

The congregation:

- a. Accepts the pastor's guidance.
- b. Agrees to encourage, respect, and follow the pastor.
- c. Agrees to pay fairly, provide for the welfare, share troubles and joys, listen to the word, welcome pastoral care, and honor the pastor's authority. (50.131)

41. CAN A CHURCH REFUSE TO ACCEPT A PASTOR'S RESIGNATION?

Yes. When this occurs, the church may appear before presbytery to show cause why the pastor should not resign. If presbytery deems the evidence insufficient, the resignation may be accepted and the relationship dissolved. (51.01)

42. CAN THE SESSION DISSOLVE THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP?

No. When it is necessary to ask a pastor to resign, there shall always be a congregational meeting called and conducted in precisely the same manner as when a pastor is called. (51.01)

43. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN MAKING SOMEONE A PASTOR EMERITUS?

- a. Action of the congregation in consultation with the Ministerial Relations Committee.
- b. Affirmation by the presbytery.

44. CAN FORMER PASTORS OF A CONGREGATION OFFICIATE AT SERVICES FOR MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION?

Yes, but only upon the invitation of the moderator or, in the moderator's absence, from the clerk of session. (51.03)

45. WHO MAY BE EMPLOYED AS STATED SUPPLIES IN CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS?

Only pastors connected with presbyteries of this church may be stated supplies, except in cases of federated churches. (52.02)

46. DO MINISTERS WHO ARE NOT ENGAGED IN REGULAR CHURCH WORK HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS?

Yes. It shall be the duty of ministers not engaged in regular church work to render service to churches without pastors, unless they are excused by presbytery (52.03)

47. WHICH COMMITTEE OF PRESBYTERY HAS SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS?

The care of such churches shall be assigned to the committee on Ministerial Relations. (52.03)

48. CAN THE MODERATOR OF A VACANT CHURCH BE CONSIDERED FOR THE PASTOR'S POSITION?

When a minister serving a vacant church desires to be a candidate for the pastor's position, he or she shall resign immediately as moderator. (52.04)

49. DOES THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HAVE LAY PREACHERS?

Yes. A lay preacher is a layman or laywoman who has been given a local commission to preach in one or more local congregations which would not otherwise be supplied. The commission is only valid in such congregations as presbytery may designate. (54.01)

50. WHAT CHARACTERISTICS MUST THE PRESBYTERY BE CERTAIN OF IN PERSONS GRANTED A LOCAL PREACHER'S COMMISSION?

- a. Personal piety.
- b. Knowledge of the Bible.
- c. Ability to preach and teach.
- d. A sound motivation.

51. FOR HOW LONG IS A LAY PREACHER'S COMMISSION VALID?

Such a commission is valid for a period not to exceed three years, as long as the presbytery will determine. Such a commission is renewable. (54.02)

52. MAY A LAY PREACHER ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS?

No. It shall be distinctly understood that a local preacher may not administer the sacraments, nor in any capacity perform a marriage. (54.02)

53. DOES PRESBYTERY PROVIDE SUPERVISION FOR THE LAY PREACHER?

Yes. Lay preachers shall work under the supervision of presbytery through the moderator of the session or sessions of the church or churches they serve. (54.02)

54. MUST EVERY PRESBYTERY HAVE A COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL RELATIONS?

Yes. Each presbytery shall elect a committee on ministerial relations to maintain the spiritual and temporal welfare of the ministers and churches under its jurisdiction. (57.01)

55. WHAT IF A PRESBYTERY HAS DIFFICULTY FINDING PERSONS TO SERVE ON THE MINISTERIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE?

The election of this committee shall take precedence over all other presbytery committee elections and appointments. (57.02)

56. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL RELATIONS FUNCTIONS?
 - a. It shall allow direct access by all ministers and active ruling elders in the presbytery in matters concerning the spiritual and temporal welfare of the churches.
 - b. The committee may counsel with ministers and churches as to their spiritual and temporal welfare.
 - c. The committee shall visit and counsel with churches in which troubles have arisen, but may not assume the session's responsibility.
 - d. Supervision of churches without pastors. (57.031-57.034)
57. IN WHAT SPECIFIC WAYS DOES THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL RELATIONS EXERCISE OVERSIGHT OF CHURCHES WITHOUT PASTORS?
 - a. By advising with the church session regarding temporary supplies.
 - b. By advising with sessions regarding interim pastors.
 - c. By advising with sessions regarding stated supplies.
 - d. By advising churches regarding the calling of a pastor.
 - e. By conferring with appropriate presbytery committees and sessions of churches receiving aid before allowing them to call a pastor or employ a stated supply.
 - f. By enforcing equal employment provisions in hiring a pastor. (57.041 - 57.046)
58. MAY A MINISTER SERVING A CHURCH AS ITS TEMPORARY SUPPLY BE CALLED AS THE PASTOR?

Ordinarily the presbytery shall not approve a minister being called as stated supply or pastor when he or she has served as temporary supply until six months have elapsed since the termination of the temporary supply relationship. When the reasons are deemed sufficient, presbytery may approve a call or stated supply relationship by a three-fourths vote. (57.041)
59. FOR HOW LONG MAY AN INTERIM PASTOR BE EMPLOYED?

An interim pastor may be employed for a definite period not to exceed twelve months. (57.042)
60. CAN THE INTERIM PASTOR MODERATE THE SESSION?

An interim pastor who is a member of the presbytery may act as moderator of session with presbytery approval. (57.042)

61. MAY AN INTERIM PASTOR CONTINUE IN THIS RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHURCH AFTER THE INITIAL TWELVE MONTHS HAVE ELAPSED?

The relationship shall be reviewed and resubmitted for approval by the presbytery at the end of one year if the vacancy lasts that long. (57.042)

62. MUST A NOMINATING COMMITTEE CONSULT THE MINISTERIAL RELATIONS BEFORE CALLING A PASTOR?

Yes. The presbytery shall permit a call to be placed in the minister's hands only when the Nominating Committee has consulted with Ministerial Relations regarding the candidate's suitability for that position. (57.044)

63. CAN A NOMINATING COMMITTEE LAWFULLY DECIDE TO ONLY CONSIDER WHITE MALE APPLICANTS FOR THE POSITION OF PASTOR.

No. The Ministerial Relations Committee shall authorize the Nominating Committee to proceed with its work only when it is satisfied that the committee will give serious consideration to all candidates, including a willingness to interview, without regard to race, ethnic origin, sex, or marital status. (57.046)

64. IS THERE A SYNOD LEVEL COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL RELATIONS?

Yes. In order to assist presbytery committees on ministerial relations, each synod shall appoint a committee on ministerial relations. (57.06)

65. WHO IS ON SYNOD'S MINISTERIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE?

The committee shall be composed of the chairpersons (or their substitutes) of the presbytery ministerial relations committees, and other ruling elders or ministers who may be appointed by the synod. (57.06)

66. IS THERE ANYTHING ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEVEL WHICH AIDS PRESBYTERY AND SYNOD COMMITTEES ON MINISTERIAL RELATIONS?

Yes. General Assembly has an agency (the Vocation Agency) which:

- a. Maintains a central bureau of information concerning candidate ministers, professional church workers, and churches and other positions seeking to call such persons.
- b. Furnishes information upon request to those seeking calls to institutions and churches seeking ministers and professional church workers.
- c. Cooperates with committees on ministerial relations regarding the spiritual and temporal welfare of

candidates, ministers, and professional church workers.
(57.07)

67. MAY A MINISTER SERVE IN A NON-DENOMINATIONAL RELIGIOUS BODY WITH WHICH THE CHURCH HAS NO OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION?

A minister of this church may only serve in such a position when proper permission has been obtained from the presbytery. Presbytery should remember that a minister's freedom in accepting a call should be restricted only on the most serious grounds. (42.23)

68. MAY A MINISTER SERVE AS PASTOR, ASSOCIATE, OR ASSISTANT IN A CHURCH OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION?

A minister may serve temporarily in another denomination in correspondence with the General Assembly. Permission for this service is subject to review and renewal and shall not extend beyond five years. (42.24)

UNIT FOUR: WORSHIP, THE SACRAMENTS,
GOD'S WORD, MARRIAGE, FUNERALS

ACTIVE REMEMBERING

Goal: The goal of this exercise is to enable the new officers to get in touch with some of these feelings about worship by remembering a specific worship experience which was especially meaningful.

Procedure: Have the members of the group take a minute or two to relax and get in touch with themselves. Ask them to be aware of how and what they are feeling. Now ask each one to recall from his or her past a particularly memorable worship experience. Ask them to be aware of the context of the experience. Is it in a church? Is it a part of an organized religious service, or something more spontaneous with a group of friends? Who are the participants? What is the predominant mood or feeling? Is there joy? Sadness? Acceptance? Relief? What contributed to the feelings?

Let the members of the group re-live the experience for several minutes, and then ask each one to share the worship experience which they recalled. Ask them to share the predominant feeling of the experience along with any details which added to the experience. Ask each one how the memory of the experience, and the sharing of it makes them feel.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

This unit deals directly with an aspect of the Church's life which is very close to our membership. It includes our attitude toward worship, the Word of God, and milestone events in each of our lives. Even though there are "right" answers for some of these questions from the Book of Order, the nature of the situations will stimulate a great deal of thinking and discussion. This could be a good opportunity for the pastor to gain valuable insights into the feelings of the new officers which will make for better pastoral care at a later date.

1. At a recent communion service, the three-year old girl sitting next to you was given communion elements by her father when she demanded "refreshments" just like everyone else was getting. Later you heard others talking about this incident with disgust. What is your feeling about children and communion? What is the Church's position on this question? In the future, how should the session deal with these kinds of situations?
2. Mrs. Jones, a long-time church member, died recently. Her funeral was held in a funeral parlor. The casket was open.

What are the important elements of a funeral service? What role would the session and deacons play in ministering to the bereaved family? Does the Book of Order offer guidance in this kind of situation? Discuss your thoughts with others.

3. You have a beautiful sanctuary which is in great demand from your community for use as a wedding chapel. Recently your pastor married a young couple who were avowed practicing agnostics. Some of the people in the church do not feel that this was proper. Was your pastor acting as a responsible presbyter? What does the Book of Order say about these kinds of circumstances? Would your answer be any different if the bride were the daughter of your clerk of session?
4. At the last meeting of the worship committee, a letter was read from one of the members of the church. The letter said in part, "...Not only do I not like our order of worship, I especially dislike the long prayers and the sermon. Couldn't we have a worship service some Sunday where all we do is sing hymns from the 'good old days'?" How could the worship committee respond in a meaningful way to this individual? What are the essential elements in corporate worship? Who has the authority over the order of worship in a Presbyterian Church? Can the session tell the pastor what hymns should be sung?
5. You are on a session. A couple in your church just had a baby who was born prematurely, and it is a very serious situation. There is only a slim chance that the baby will live. The parents want to have the baby baptized to make certain that it will go to heaven if it dies. Since the request for baptism has come only hours before a session meeting, the pastor had decided to seek your counsel. What is our Church's position on baptism? Does the constitution deal with problems such as the one this couple raises? How should the session respond to this couple?

R E F E R E N C E Q U E S T I O N S

1. WHICH TASKS ARE ENTRUSTED TO THOSE ORDAINED TO THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT?
 - a. Direction and leading of public worship.
 - b. Special responsibility for proclaiming the word of God.
 - c. Administration of the sacrament. (16.04)
2. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ORDERING OF PUBLIC WORSHIP?

The entire session is responsible for the ordering of public worship. (16.041)

3. MAY DEACONS BE INVITED TO HELP IN DISTRIBUTING COMMUNION ELEMENTS?

Yes. Either ruling elders or deacons may be invited by session to distribute the elements. (16.041)

4. WHAT IS A MAIN CHARACTERISTIC OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP?

Christian worship is... above all, to be considered as communal worship. It is a corporate response by the church to God's mighty act of redemption in Jesus Christ. (17.02)

5. SHOULD CHRISTIANS WORSHIP TOGETHER OTHER THAN ON SUNDAYS?

Christians can worship God at any time, for all time has been redeemed by him. (17.04)

6. DOES GOD SPEAK TO PEOPLE OTHER THAN THROUGH THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND WORSHIP?

Yes. Christians may expect to hear God's voice clearly while reading scripture, and during private prayer. (17.05)

7. WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD?

The Word of God is essentially Jesus Christ, the Word who became flesh. (18.01)

8. IS THERE MORE TO PREACHING THAN SPEAKING THE WORD?

Yes. Preaching calls for hearing as well as speaking. (18.031)

9. DO ORDAINED MINISTERS ACT ON THEIR OWN AUTHORITY WHEN ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENTS?

No. Ministers do not act in their own right, but on behalf of Christ and his church. (18.031)

10. WHAT ARE THE SACRAMENTS RECOGNIZED BY THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?

- a. The Lord's Supper
- b. Baptism (38.05)

11. WHO MAY AUTHORIZE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS?

The Sacraments may be administered by authorization of the session or a higher judicatory. (38.05)

12. MAY MINISTERS OF THIS CHURCH CELEBRATE COMMUNION IN AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL SETTING?

13. SHOULD A MINISTER ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS TO THE SICK WITHOUT AN ELDER PRESENT?

If possible, officers and other members of the congregation should be present to manifest the communal nature of the sacrament. (20.06)

14. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DIFFERENT NAMES BY WHICH COMMUNION IS KNOWN?

- a. The Lord's Supper
- b. Breaking of Bread
- c. Holy Communion
- d. Eucharist (21.02)

15. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER TO THE REST OF THE SERVICE?

It is normally to be celebrated as the culmination of the public worship of God, and shall not be isolated from the acts of worship which precede and follow it. (21.031)

16. IS ANYONE "GOOD" ENOUGH TO RECEIVE COMMUNION?

No. The sacrament is understood as a privilege given to the undeserving rather than a right conferred upon the worthy. (21.031)

17. SHOULD INFANT AND BELIEVER BAPTISM BE ADMINISTERED DURING THE SAME SERVICE?

It is appropriate to have both infants and believers baptized in the same service. (20.021)

18. DOES THE SESSION HAVE A CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITY FOR FAMILIES WITH BAPTIZED CHILDREN?

Yes. Baptized children are recorded as baptized members of the church and numbered among those for whom the session has responsibility. The session shall continue to counsel ... the families as they interpret the Lord's Supper to their children. (20.021)

19. IN BAPTISM, WHAT RESPONSIBILITY DOES THE CONGREGATION ASSUME?

The congregation accepts the obligation to act as a true household and family of God made up of loving individuals with mutual concern for each other. (20.04)

20. DOES THE ORDER OF A WORSHIP SERVICE MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHEN WE WORSHIP GOD?

Though we do not prescribe a specific order, it does make

a difference. Careless public worship may be both an offense to God and a stumbling block to his people. (19.01)

21. IS IT IMPORTANT FOR THE CONGREGATION TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN WORSHIP?

Yes. A worship service is the people's service. They will not be spectators watching what others do, but participants who, together with the pastor, are engaged in a joint ministry of corporate worship. (19.03)

22. SHOULD WE THINK OF THE CHURCH'S CHOIR AS "PERFORMING" AN ANTHEM FOR THE CONGREGATION?

No. When the choir sings in worship, it is representing the congregation - which is the true choir. (19.03)

23. IS IT ALWAYS NECESSARY TO READ THE SCRIPTURES DURING PUBLIC WORSHIP?

Yes. Public worship will always include the reading and hearing of the written word of God. It is appropriate that there be a reading from both the old and new testaments. (19.06)

24. HOW OFTEN IS IT APPROPRIATE TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The sacraments are an integral part of public worship. They may be fittingly observed any Lord's day. (19.09)

25. IS IT APPROPRIATE UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO BAPTIZE SOMEONE IN PRIVATE?

No. There is ordinarily no justification for baptizing anyone outside of the context of a congregation's service of worship. (20.01)

26. WHAT IS BAPTISM?

The sacrament of baptism is:

- a. The word made visible as ordained by Jesus Christ.
- b. A means by which men and women are called into the company of Christ's people.
- c. A sign of God's love for us in Jesus Christ. (20.01)

27. IS IT PROPER FOR A MINISTER TO DECIDE TO BAPTIZE A CHILD WITHOUT CONSULTING THE SESSION?

No. Ordinarily the session shall take appropriate action to authorize and approve the baptism of children. (20.021)

28. SHOULD A SESSION AUTHORIZE THE BAPTISM OF AN INFANT TO INSURE THE CHILD'S SALVATION.

- No. Baptism of infants is not practiced out of fear of the condition of the soul of an unbaptized child.
(20.021)
29. SHOULD A FUNERAL BE HELD IN A FUNERAL HOME OR IN THE CHURCH?
- The services should ordinarily be held in the church.
(24.03)
30. DOES THE CHURCH OFFER ANY GUIDANCE ON WHETHER OR NOT THE CASKET SHOULD BE OPEN DURING THE FUNERAL SERVICE?
- The casket should remain closed. (24.03)
31. SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN FUNERAL BE HELD AT THE SAME TIME AS FRATERNAL OR CIVIL RITES?
- No. The Christian service of witness to the resurrection should be considered complete in itself, and another hour and place should be appointed for any fraternal or civil rites. (24.03)
32. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF CHURCH AUTHORITY?
- Church authority is only ministerial and declarative. The Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners.
(31.07)
33. SHOULD A MINISTER PERFORM A MARRIAGE CEREMONY WITHOUT FIRST COUNSELING WITH THE COUPLE INVOLVED?
- No. Any minister asked to marry a man and a women shall participate with them in instruction and discussion of the privileges and obligations they will assume in Christian marriage. (22.02)
34. SHOULD A MINISTER PERFORM A MARRIAGE CEREMONY FOR NON-BELIEVERS?
- No. It is expected that at least one of the partners is a professing Christian. (22.02)
35. WHAT IS THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY WHEN ONE OF ITS MEMBERS IS ILL?
- The entire congregation shares in ministry to the sick. It will be the duty of elders and deacons and others in the congregation to visit the sick and call to the attention of the pastor such persons as are in need of the pastor's ministry. (23.02)
36. WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF THE CONGREGATION WHEN ONE OF ITS MEMBERS IS DYING?

Such persons should not face death in isolation. They can be sustained and upheld by the entire people of God. The pastor and other members have a special responsibility not only to pray with and for the bereaved, but be of practical assistance to them. (24.02)

UNIT FIVE: PRESBYTERY, SYNOD, GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GROUP CONSENSUS

Goals: The goal of this exercise is to give the group the opportunity to work creatively with each other to find consensus. Consensus offers the opportunity of group decision-making which creates fewer losers than traditional vote-taking. It is a useful means of conflict management. This exercise is also useful in values clarification.

Procedure: The group may use the suggested list of statements, or you may want to generate ten other statements more suited to your situation. The group should be given a mimeographed copy of the statements or they could be written on the blackboard for the group to copy. Initially, each person must work alone and rank the statements from 1-10. A decision must be made on each statement. There should be only one 1, one 2, one 3, etc.

After each person has finished with their personal ranking, the group should come together and through dialogue, form a group ranking. It is important that there is no horesetrading, and no voting. Consensus means neither unanimity nor majority rule.

Discuss the process. Was one person dominant? How did the group feel about the process?

Ranking:

- | Group | Personal | One denomination should: |
|-------|----------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Be more visible in the World Council of Churches |
| _____ | _____ | 2. Emphasize the building of new church developments in ethnic minority communities. |
| _____ | _____ | 3. Devote a larger portion of the mission dollar to overseas missionary endeavors. |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Continue to be involved in important social issues. |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Produce better church school material for adult education. |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Be more evangelical. |
| _____ | _____ | 7. Provide more direction for our daily lives. |
| _____ | _____ | 8. Emphasize the need for more new church developments in ethnic majority communities. |

- _____
- _____
9. Provide resources to help local churches to be more inclusive of single people.
10. Hasten the re-union with the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

Q U E S T I O N S F O R D I S C U S S I O N

Unit four is designed to give the new officers the opportunity to explore their feelings, and to gain new insights, about the higher judicatories. This unit provides the leader with an opportunity to help the elders and deacons understand that they are ordained to serve the whole Church of Christ, and not only the particular church. The officer who understands the power and responsibility of presbytery, synod, and General Assembly, will feel more a part of the whole church, and he or she will become more effective on the local level as a result.

1. Your session has been discussing the curriculum for the new member classes. One of the members of session feels that it would be helpful to include a section on the presbytery. What would be the things about your own presbytery which you would like to share with new members? What are the powers granted to presbytery in the Book of Order? Are the powers which you would like to add or subtract on this list?
2. There has been a great deal of conversation recently about the viability of the synods. What is the role of the synod in the United Presbyterian Church? What powers and responsibilities does the synod have? Can the synod be seen as a unit of mission? Why? Why not? In what ways can you see the synod in action in your own area?
3. At the summer meeting of your local mariners group, some of the members were expressing grave concern about an action of the recent General Assembly. One of those involved in the discussion was heard to say, "The General Assembly is run by a bunch of ministers anyway. They never listen to the rank and file members." Assuming that you feel a need to enter this conversation, what would you say to this statement? How are delegates to the General Assembly chosen? Are there many more ministers there than elders? What kinds of power has the Church invested in the General Assembly?
4. At a meeting of presbytery to which you are a delegate, a motion is made that a committee be elected to preside at the installation of a pastor at Faith Presbyterian Church. Is this a proper motion? Is there a difference between a committee and a commission? If there is a difference, explain it. Who has the right to act on behalf of presbytery in the installation of a pastor?

5. As a member of presbytery's General Council, you have been gaining a lot of valuable knowledge about Presbyterian polity. At a recent meeting, a member of the General Council was hired to be presbytery's educational consultant. A debate ensued as to whether or not this was proper, and you were appointed to serve on a task force to find out. What guidance does the Book of Order offer on this question? What are some of the alternatives the General Council might have?

REFERENCE QUESTIONS

1. What guidelines should a presbytery use to determine who shall be continuing members of presbytery?

A continuing member of presbytery's ministry shall:

- a. be in demonstrable conformity with the mission of God's people so set forth in Scriptures, the Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order.
- b. be one which serves others and enables the ministry of others
- c. evince theologically informed fidelity to God's Word - normally requiring the M. Div. Degree or its equivalent.
- d. be carried on in accountability to the presbytery and other organizations, where appropriate for its character and conduct. (42.02)

2. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAINING RULING ELDERS?

The presbytery shall guide and oversee the particular churches in the training of ruling elders. (42.08)

3. WHAT ARE THE POWERS OF PRESBYTERY?

- a. To receive and decide appeals, complaints, and references brought before it in orderly manner.
- b. To receive under care candidates for ministry.
 1. Dismiss candidates to other presbyteries.
 2. Examine and license candidates.
- c. To receive and dismiss licentiates.
- d. Receive, dismiss, ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers.
- e. To appoint and commission lay workers.
- f. To elect persons to presbytery committees.
- g. To review, approve and require correction in session minutes.
- h. To establish or dissolve pastoral relations.
- i. To require ministers to devote themselves to their calling.
- j. To see that lawful injunctions of the higher judicatories are obeyed.
- k. To resolve questions of doctrine.

- l. To condemn erroneous opinions.
- m. To inquire into and correct the evils which have arisen in churches.
- n. To unite and divide churches.
- o. To form and receive new churches.
- p. To take oversight of churches without pastors.
- p. To dissolve churches.
- r. To concert measures for the enlargement of the church within its bounds.
- s. To order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care.
- t. To elect commissioners to General Assembly.
- u. To propose to the Synod or General Assembly such measures as may be of benefit to the church at large.
(42.08)

4. WHAT IS A SYNOD?

A synod consists of the ministers and ruling elders of not fewer than three presbyteries with a geographic region.
(43.01)

5. IS IT TRUE THAT MINISTERS OUTNUMBER LAYPERSONS ON THE SYNOD LEVEL?

No. The delegations from each presbytery shall be divided equally between ministers and ruling elders. (43.01)

6. WHAT IS A QUORUM AT A SYNOD MEETING?

Each synod shall adopt standing rules defining a quorum. These rules shall require the presence of at least seven ministers, of which not more than three shall be from the same presbytery, and at least three ruling elders.
(43.02)

7. WHAT ARE THE POWERS OF SYNOD?

- a. To receive and decide all appeals and complaints brought to it from the presbyteries.
- b. To review and approve presbytery records and require their correction.
- c. Redress whatever has been done in the presbyteries which is contrary to order.
- d. To take effectual care that presbyteries observe the constitution.
- e. To erect new presbyteries and unite or divide those which were erected before subject to General Assembly.
- f. To elect persons to synod committees.
- g. To appoint ministers to such work as may fall under its jurisdiction.
- h. To work with presbyteries, sessions, and people under their care to promote the edification of the church.

- i. To concert measures for promoting the prosperity of the church within its bounds.
- j. To propose to General Assembly such measures as may be of common advantage to the whole church. (43.05)

8. WHAT ARE THE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MODERATOR?

- a. Preservation of order.
- b. Convening and adjourning the judicatory.
- c. Directing the operations of the judicatory.
- d. Proposing all items of deliberation.
- e. Proposing the most regular and speedy way of disposing of business.
- f. Preventing members from interrupting one another.
- g. Require members to address the chair when speaking.
- h. Prevent speakers from deviating and personal reflection.
- i. Silence those who refuse to obey orders.
- j. Require members to obtain permission before leaving.
- k. At the proper time to put the question and call the votes.
- l. Vote in case of a tie.
- m. Convene the judicatory in case of special emergency.
- n. Perform such administrative duties as the judicatory may assign. (55.02)

9. WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR THE MODERATOR OF A PRESBYTERY OR SYNOD?

The moderator shall be chosen for such a term as presbytery or synod may determine not exceeding one year. (55.03)

10. IS IT LEGAL FOR DEACONS OR UNORDAINED PERSONS TO SERVE ON SYNOD COMMITTEES?

Yes. Synod may elect deacons or unordained persons to its program (as distinct from its ecclesiastical) committees. (43.05)

11. IS SYNOD CONSIDERED A MISSION UNIT WHICH IS IN NEED OF A MISSION STRATEGY?

Yes. Synod shall develop a comprehensive strategy for the mission of the church within its bounds in light of the comprehensive strategy of the General Assembly. (43.06)

12. CAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEVELOP A MISSION STRATEGY WITHOUT CONSIDERING OTHER JUDICATORIES?

No. In developing the strategy and resources for mission, the General Assembly shall consult and negotiate with synods. (43.06)

13. HOW DO WE DECIDE HOW MANY DELEGATES SHOULD BE ELECTED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY?

Each presbytery shall elect one minister and one ruling elder commissioner for every 8500 active members within its bounds. The presbytery may elect one minister and ruling elder for every fractional number of ministers and active members not less than 4250. (44.04)

14. WHAT CONSTITUTES A QUORUM AT A GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION?

Any one hundred or more commissioners, at least fifty of whom shall be ministers and at least twenty-five of whom shall be ruling elders, representing presbyteries of seven or more synods shall be a quorum. (44.07)

15. WHAT POWERS BELONG TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY?

- a. Deciding in all controversies respecting doctrine and the interpreting of the constitution.
 - b. Reproving, warning, or bearing testimony against error in doctrine or immorality in practice in any church, presbytery, or synod.
 - c. Erecting new synods.
 - d. Dividing, uniting, or combining synods or portions of synods previously existing.
 - e. Approving the union, division, or erecting of presbyteries by synods.
 - f. Authorizing a synod or presbytery to receive under its jurisdiction a body suited to become a part of said judicatory.
 - g. Uniting with other ecclesiastical bodies.
 - h. Superintending the concerns of the whole church.
 - i. Corresponding with other churches.
 - j. Suppressing schismatical contentions and disputes.
 - k. In general, of recommending and attempting reformation of manner, and the promotion of charity, truth, holiness, through all the churches under its care.
- (44.10)

16. DO SYNODS, PRESBYTERIES, AND PARTICULAR CHURCHES HAVE CORPORATIONS?

Yes. Each has a corporation (except where civil law prohibits) to receive, hold, encumber, manage, and transfer property, and to facilitate the management of its civil affairs as may be directed by the judicatory.
(62.02-62.04)

17. DOES THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAVE A GENERAL COUNCIL?

Yes. It is called the General Assembly Mission Council.
(59.01)

18. HOW IS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL COMPOSED?

The General Assembly Mission Council shall consist of:

- a. The Moderator of General Assembly and the Moderator's two most recent living predecessors.
 - b. One or two members nominated annually by designated General Assembly agencies.
 - c. One member from each synod and one additional member from synods numbering more than 200,000.
 - d. Nine members at large. (59.01)
19. HOW IS THE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL CHOSEN?
- The most recent living predecessor to the Moderator of the General Assembly shall be chairperson of the General Assembly Mission Council. (59.02)
20. DOES THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL HAVE A VICE-CHAIRPERSON?
- Yes. The General Assembly Mission Council elects a vice-chairperson from its own membership for a one-year term. (59.02)
21. WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO ELECT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL?
- The General Assembly Mission Council shall elect an Executive Director subject to confirmation by the General Assembly. (59.03)
22. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MISSION COUNCIL?
- The duties of the General Assembly Mission Council are subject to the authority of General Assembly, but they include:
- a. Cultivation of the spiritual welfare of the whole church.
 - b. Institution of churchwide equal employment opportunity.
 - c. Churchwide planning - including goals and objectives.
 - d. Review of the work of General Assembly agencies and presbyteries and synods in light of established goals and objectives.
 - e. Preparation of General Assembly Mission Budget for General Assembly approval.
 - f. Studying the organization of General Assembly and its agencies and recommending needed change.
 - g. Making certain that the boards and agencies are representative of young adults, and persons from minority and ethnic groups.
 - h. Coordination of the work of General Assembly and synods and presbyteries.
 - i. Corresponding with presbyteries, synods, and their

- General Councils in matters relating to budget development, churchwide planning and the coordination of the work of the church.
- j. Reviewing the work of the Office of the General Assembly.
 - k. To counsel and concur with each General Assembly agency concerning the nomination of its chief administrative officer.
 - l. To participate in the annual review of the work of each agency's administrative officer and report its findings to the Council on Administrative Services.
 - m. To consider between General Assembly meetings any emergency related to the work of General Assembly. (59.04)
23. WHAT DUTIES CAN AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEVEL ASSUME?
- Such a commission may be given special responsibilities, for a limited period of time, as the constitution or previous General Assembly enactments have not already assigned. (60.06)
24. WHO IS ENTRUSTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAKING NOMINATIONS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY BOARDS AND AGENCIES?
- A Permanent Nominating Committee composed of fifteen members, equitably representing the various interests and geographical areas of the church, with the inclusion of men, women, young adults, and persons from minority and ethnic groups, shall make such nomination. (61.01)
25. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT A PERSON CAN SERVE ON THE PERMANENT NOMINATING COMMITTEE?
- A full term is five years, and a person completing such a term is ineligible to serve again until four years have elapsed. (61.02)
26. WHAT PROVISIONS ARE THERE FOR BEING CERTAIN THAT RACIAL AND ETHNIC MINORITIES, WOMEN AND YOUNG PERSONS ARE FAIRLY REPRESENTED ON ALL GENERAL ASSEMBLY AGENCIES?
- The constitution says, "In making nominations, the committee shall provide for fair representation of racial and ethnic minorities, women, and young people among the nominees of the synods. Significant numbers of women and members of minority and ethnic groups shall be included." (61.03)
27. CAN NOMINATIONS STILL BE MADE FROM THE FLOOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY?
- Yes. The appointment of this committee shall not be con-

strued to prevent any commissioner from nominating any eligible person (61.07)

28. WHEN IS THE MODERATOR OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY CHOSEN?

The moderator of the General Assembly shall be chosen at each meeting. (55.03)

29. WHEN CAN A VICE-MODERATOR ASSUME THE DUTIES OF MODERATOR?

- a. When requested to do so by the moderator.
- b. When at any meeting of the judicatory the moderator is not present.
- c. When the moderator is incapacitated by illness or other causes.
- d. Upon the moderator's death or removal from office. (55.04)

30. WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF A STATED CLERK?

The duties of the stated clerk are determined by the judicatory but they include:

- a. Recording of all transactions.
- b. Preservation of records.
- c. Granting excerpts from records whenever properly required. (56.01)

31. WHEN A CHURCH OR PRESBYTERY IS DISSOLVED, WHAT HAPPENS TO ITS RECORDS?

Records of dissolved churches or presbyteries are held for them by the next higher judicatory in whose bounds they were before dissolution. (56.02)

32. MAY A SALARIED EMPLOYEE OR OFFICER OF A PRESBYTERY OR SYNOD SIT AS A VOTING MEMBER OF A GENERAL COUNCIL?

No. However, a salaried employee or officer may sit with a General Council as a corresponding member without a vote. (59.10)

33. HOW DOES ONE BECOME THE CHAIRPERSON OF A GENERAL COUNCIL?

A prestery or synod shall elect the chairperson of its General Council. (59.11)

34. WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DOES A GENERAL COUNCIL HANDLE?

- a. Administrative business which may be referred to it by the judicatory.
- b. Any administrative business which may come to its attention between meetings of the judicatory. (59.12)

35. ARE RECORDS OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A GENERAL COUNCIL OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION?

No. All business transacted by a General Council shall be considered private unless definitely voted otherwise.

36. WHAT GENERAL POWERS DOES A PRESBYTERY GENERAL COUNCIL HAVE?

- a. Preparation of the docket for presbytery meetings with the stated clerk.
- b. Consideration of all proposals and appeals for money.
- c. Direction of the work of employed administrative personnel.
- d. Correspondence with General Councils of synods and General Assembly.
- e. Presentation to the churches the budget of missionary and benevolent causes adopted by General Assembly. (59.14)

37. WHAT SPECIFIC POWERS MAY THE PRESBYTERY VOTE TO GIVE A GENERAL COUNCIL?

- a. To receive or dismiss ministers in good standing who are without pastoral charge.
- b. To dissolve pastoral relations of ministers in good standing.
- c. To appoint moderators for sessions where a pulpit is declared vacant.
- d. To approve a congregation's call to a pastor or associate pastor.
- e. To place a properly approved call in a minister's hands.
- f. To transmit a properly approved call to a minister of another presbytery through its stated clerk.
- g. To receive a minister in good standing to labor within presbytery.
- h. To appoint a commission to install a minister.
- i. To receive under care candidates or licentiates under the care of other presbyteries.
- j. To dismiss candidates and licentiates to other presbyteries.
- k. To install ministers.
- l. To organize or dissolve churches.
- m. To adjust difficulties in particular churches after appropriate action by presbytery. (59.14)

38. IS MANDATORY FOR PRESBYTERIES AND SYNODS TO CONSULT THE COUNCIL ON ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES PRIOR TO CALLING AN EXECUTIVE?

Yes. (70.01)

39. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER?

- a. To be chief administrator for presbytery and provide staff services to presbytery committees.
 - b. To be a member of synod staff.
 - c. To interpret presbytery's interest to synod and the interests of the synod and the whole church to presbytery.
 - d. To interpret presbytery decisions and programs to sessions.
 - e. To interpret presbytery decisions and policies to the public.
 - f. To supervise presbytery staff in implementing presbytery policies and decisions.
 - g. To coordinate the work of synod or General Assembly staff working in the presbytery.
 - h. To represent presbytery in ecumenical relations when so delegated.
 - i. To serve as a resource advisor to presbytery ministerial relations committee and counsel clergy.
 - j. To serve as an ex-officio member of presbytery's general council and other committees. (69.01)
40. WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE POSITION OF EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER?
- Both men and women, regardless of race, ethnic origin, or marital status are eligible for this position.
(69.02)
41. WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THOSE PRESENT AT A PRESBYTERY MEETING IS NECESSARY TO ELECT AN EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER?
- A two-thirds majority is necessary to elect the executive presbyter. (69.02)
42. WHAT IS THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR AN EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER?
- The executive presbyter shall be elected for a five-year term, or for an indefinite period, at the discretion of the presbytery. (69.03)
43. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SYNOD EXECUTIVE?
- a. To be synod's chief administrator.
 - b. To interpret the interests of the synod to the whole church.
 - c. To interpret the decisions and programs of the synod to presbyteries and sessions.
 - d. To serve as an interpreter of synod decisions to the public.
 - e. To serve as chairperson and convener of the total synod staff.
 - f. To supervise the administrative staff of synod, executive presbyters, and staff of General Assembly agencies in the synod, in implementing synod policies and decisions.

- g. When delegates, to represent synod in ecumenical relations.
 - h. To serve as ex-officio member of general council and synod committees, including the committee responsible for personnel. (69.21)
44. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO SERVE AS A SYNOD EXECUTIVE?
- Both men and women regardless of race, ethnic origin or marital status are eligible for this position. (69.22)
45. IS THERE AN AGENCY OR COUNCIL ON A NATIONAL LEVEL WHICH AIDS PRESBYTERIES AND SYNOD IN EMPLOYMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF?
- Yes. The Council on Administrative Services (CAS) fulfills this function. (70.01)
46. WHAT POWERS ARE POSSESSED BY A SYNOD GENERAL COUNCIL?
- a. To prepare the docket for synod meetings.
 - b. To correspond with presbytery General Councils and the General Assembly Mission Council.
 - c. To carry out the decisions of synod with respect to presbyteries, sessions, and people under the care of synod.
 - d. To direct the work of employed administrative personnel.
 - e. To inquire into conditions existing in any presberty.
 - f. To have charge of the budget of the benevolent and missionary causes and agencies within synod. (59.15)
47. IS THERE ANY RECOURSE IF SYNOD DOES NOT APPROVE THE ACTIONS OF ITS GENERAL COUNCIL?
- Yes. The decisions of General Council shall be immediately operative wherever power has been conferred, but may be reviewed and reversed by the synod. (59.15)
48. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COMMITTEE AND A COMMISSION?
- Yes. A commission differs from a committee in this, that while a committee is appointed to examine, consider, and report, a commission is empowered to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it, subject to the approval of the appointing judicatory. (60.01)
49. HOW MANY PERSONS MUST BE APPOINTED TO AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION?
- Presbytery: a minimum of three ministers and three ruling elders.
Synod: at least seven ministers and seven ruling elders.

General at least eight minister and eight ruling Assembly: elders. (60.03)

50. WHAT KINDS OF POWERS MAY BE GIVEN TO A PRESBYTERY ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION?

- a. To ordain candidates who have been deemed satisfactory.
- b. To install ministers.
- c. To organize or merge churches.
- d. To visit particular churches or other institutions within the bounds of presbytery. (60.04)

51. WHAT KINDS OF POWER MAY BE GIVEN TO AN ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION OF SYNOD?

- a. To carry out the specific directions of synod with respect to presbyteries, sessions, and congregations under the care of synod.
- b. To inquire into reported conditions in any presbytery, institution, or organization under synod's jurisdiction. (60.05)

52. CAN PRESBYTERIES OF THIS CHURCH FORM ORGANIC UNIONS WITH SIMILAR BODIES OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS?

Yes, but such action requires the approval of synod. (67.01)

53. WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THOSE ATTENDING A PRESBYTERY MEETING IS NECESSARY TO PASS A MOTION FOR UNION?

Such a motion must pass with a two-thirds majority. (67.02)

54. MAY A SYNOD OF THIS DENOMINATION FORM AN ORGANIC UNION WITH A SIMILAR BODY OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION?

Yes, providing the plan of union is approved by the General Assembly. (68.01)

UNIT SIX: THE CHURCH, UNIVERSAL, UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN, PARTICULAR

DIRECTED FANTASY

Goal: The goal of this exercise is first, to help the officers see that part of their job is to hold a vision for the church, and secondly, to learn that they can share their vision with each other.

Procedure: Ask the members of the group to close their eyes, relax, and attempt to clear their heads. Give them about one minute to truly relax. Ask them to be aware of their bodies, their heart beat, respiration, and any feelings which they might be experiencing.

Now ask them to visualize the church, and to visualize their "dream" for the church. Ask them to be aware of what the dream looks like. Who is in the dream? How does it feel to have realized the dream. What part does each one play? What resources are necessary?

Ask each member to share his or her dream with the rest of the group. Should any of these dreams become goals for your church?

Have the group reflect on the experience together.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Your session is about to call a congregational meeting to do some very important business. Some of the members of session are not sure about how much notice for such a meeting is required by the Book of Order. It is finally decided that notice of the meeting will be mailed to each member on the Tuesday before the Sunday of the meeting. Is this decision consistent with the provisions of the constitution? Explain your answer.
2. Your church has considered the possibility of merging with a neighboring congregation which is a part of the Reformed Church in America. The situation is this: your church is in a state of decline, because the immediate neighborhood is surrounded by commercial enterprises. The Reformed Church, on the other hand, is growing and vital. Aside from merger, what other options are available? If a merger seems to be viable, what steps should be taken? What does the Book of Order consider to be valid reasons for merger? What are the procedures?
3. In a recent officers training class, the members of your session discovered a provision in the Book of Order which you feel needs to be changed. What are the steps which are necessary to amend the Book of Order? How does this

process differ from the steps required to amend the Book of Confessions?

4. Members of your church have been receiving copies of the Presbyterian Layman. Recently during a discussion, someone asked if organizations like the Presbyterian Lay Committee are officially related to the Church, or just existing within the Church. What provisions does the constitution make for these kinds of organizations?

R E F E R E N C E Q U E S T I O N S

1. IN OUR DENOMINATION IS THERE A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE ORDAINED, AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT?

No. Although no absolute distinct may be drawn between those who are ordained, and other Christians, since there are diversities of gifts but the same spirit, a distinction of office is acknowledged. And certain tasks of the Church are reserved for those ordained to fulfill them. (16.04).

2. WHAT RULE GOVERNS THE ELECTION OF A CHURCH'S NOMINATING COMMITTEE?

Such a committee must:

- a. Be representative of all people in the church.
- b. Have two members of session, one of whom shall chair.
- c. Have one member from the Board of Deacons (if there is such a board) and from the Trustees, if there are trustees.
- d. Have a majority from the congregation at large who are not serving on session, deacons, trustees. (47.012)

3. CAN THE CONGREGATION NOMINATE PROSPECTIVE OFFICERS FROM THE FLOOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING?

Yes. Full opportunity shall always be given for such nomination by any eligible voter. (47.013)

4. IS THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A CORPORATION?

The General Assembly shall cause a corporation to be formed and maintained which will enable it to receive, hold, and transfer property, and to facilitate the management of its corporate affairs. (62.01)

5. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A PARTICULAR UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TO FORM A UNION WITH A CHURCH OF ANOTHER DENOMINATION?

Yes. Particular churches of the Church may unite to form

union with one or more particular churches of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, of the Reformed Church in America, and other Reformed bodies, with the approval of presbytery. (66.01)

6. WHAT SHOULD BE THE PURPOSE OF UNITING A PARTICULAR CHURCH OF THIS DENOMINATION WITH ONE FROM ANOTHER DENOMINATION?

The purpose of such a union is to provide for the worship of Almighty God and instruction in the Christian religion by a united congregation. (66.02)

7. AT WHAT POINT WOULD SUCH A UNION BE CONSIDERED ACCOMPLISHED?

After the approval of the presbytery (or similar body) of jurisdiction, the union would be considered effective as of the date when each of the congregations approve the plan by a two-thirds majority vote taken at a regular called meeting of the congregation. (66.02)

8. WHAT IS THE OBJECT OF ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE?

Ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its object. It has no civil effects. (31.08)

9. WHAT IS THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH?

The Universal Church consists of all persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ and of submission to his laws. (33.02)

10. WHAT ARE THE GREAT ENDS OF THE CHURCH?

- a. Proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of mankind.
- b. The shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.
- c. The maintenance of divine worship.
- d. The preservation of the truth.
- e. The promotion of social righteousness.
- f. The exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. (33.04)

11. WHAT IS A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

A particular church consists of a number of professing Christians with their children voluntarily associated together for divine worship and godly living, agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, and submitting to a certain form of government. (34.01)

12. WHO HAS THE AUTHORITY TO ORGANIZE A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

Only presbytery has the authority to organize a particular church. (34.02)

13. WHAT ARE THE SIX STEPS IN ORGANIZING A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

- a. Reception of members by transfer of letter and profession of faith.
- b. Subscription to a covenant.
- c. Election, examination, ordination, and installation of Ruling Elders.
- d. Declaration of organization by presiding minister.
- e. Action to secure the regular ministration of Word and Sacrament.
- f. Adoption of by-laws.

14. WHAT ELEMENTS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A COVENANT SIGNED AT THE ORGANIZATION OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

- a. Name of the church.
- b. Agreement to be disciples of Christ under the provisions in the Constitution of the UPCUSA.
- c. Promise to maintain the church in:
 1. attendance
 2. support of its work
 3. gifts
 4. efforts
 5. prayers
- d. Seek to glorify the name and further the cause of Jesus Christ. (34.022)

15. WHAT ORDINANCES WERE ESTABLISHED BY CHRIST?

- a. Prayer, singing praises, reading, expounding and preaching the Word of God.
- b. Administering Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- c. Thanksgiving, catechizing, making collections for the poor.
- d. Exercising discipline.
- e. Blessing the people. (34.03)

16. WHAT ARE THE RADICAL PRINCIPLES OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE?

- a. That the several different congregations constitute the Church.
- b. That the larger part of the church governs the smaller.
- c. A representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part. A majority shall govern. (35.01)

17. WHO MAY VOTE IN A MEETING OF A CONGREGATION OR HIGHER JUDICATORY?

Only members of a judicatory who are personally present are entitled to vote. (35.04)

18. HOW IS ECCLESIASTICAL POWER EXERCISED?

Ecclesiastical power is exercised in two ways:

- a. Officers exercise it in personal ministries, as individuals.
- b. Officers exercise it jointly in the jurisdictions. (35.06)

19. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH IN THE TASK OF MINISTRY?

Through Baptism and commissioning, church members become partners with God in the ministry of the church. (36.01)

20. WHO IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

All who are joined to Christ through baptism, profess faith in him, participate in the fellowship of the Lord's Supper, and through their commissioning accept responsibility for mission and governance in a particular church are active member. (36.01)

21. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?

The purpose of church membership is for participation in the mission of Christ. (36.04)

**22. WHAT ARE THREE ESSENTIAL FACTORS IN ACCEPTING A CALL?
(to be an elder, deacon, or professional minister)**

Before accepting a call, a person should have:

- a. A sense of inner persuasion.
- b. A sound faith and live by it.
- c. The approval of God's people and the concurring judgment of a lawful judicatory of the church. (37.03)

23. WHO MAY VOTE IN THE CORPORATION MEETING OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH?

Only active members of a particular church may vote at meetings of a church corporation. (62.05)

24. IS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN THE TRUSTEES HAVE SUPERIOR AUTHORITY OVER A SESSION?

No. The duties and powers of the trustees of a particular church shall not infringe upon the duties and powers of the session. (62.06)

25. SHOULD THE NEWLY ELECTED TRUSTEES OF A CONGREGATION RECEIVE ANY SPECIAL RECOGNITION?

Yes. The trustees shall be properly recognized at a service of worship and set apart to the discharge of their responsibilities by prayer. (62.08)

26. HOW MUCH NOTICE SHOULD BE GIVEN WHEN CALLING A CORPORATION MEETING?

Unless otherwise provided, such a meeting shall be called by giving public notice thereof from the pulpit on the two successive Sundays next preceding the day of such a meeting. (62.09)

27. IS IT PROPER TO ALLOW A PERSON TO VOTE BY PROXY AT A CORPORATION MEETING?

Under ordinary circumstances, it is not proper and shall not be permitted except in those states where voting by proxy in religious corporations is expressly required by law. (62.10)

28. WHEN A PARTICULAR CHURCH CEASES TO EXIST, WHAT HAPPENS TO ITS PROPERTY?

Such property shall be held, used, and applied for such uses as the presbytery may direct. Or, the property may be sold or disposed of as the presbytery may direct in conformity with the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. (62.11)

29. MAY A PARTICULAR CHURCH ON ITS OWN AUTHORITY BUY, SELL, OR ENCUMBER REAL PROPERTY?

No. This can only be done with written permission from the presbytery transmitted through the session. (62.12)

30. WHAT MAJOR STEPS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MERGE THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WITH ANOTHER ECCLESIASTICAL BODY?

- a. The approval of the proposed union by the General Assembly and its recommendation to the presbyteries.
- b. The approval in writing of two-thirds of all the presbyteries.
- c. The approval and consummation by the General Assembly next ensuing. (63.00-63.003)

31. WHAT ARE THE TWO PARTS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA?

- a. The Book of Confessions
- b. The Book of Order (64.01)

32. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS?

- a. The Nicene Creed
- b. The Apostles Creed
- c. Such confessions and catechisms which have from time to time been adopted. (64.01)

33. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE BOOK OF ORDER?

The Book of Order consists of three parts:

- a. The Directory for Worship
- b. The Form of Government
- c. The Book of Church Discipline. (64.01)

34. HOW CAN AMENDMENTS TO THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS BE MADE?

The process for amending the Book of Confessions is as follows:

- a. The amendment is proposed by the General Assembly.
- b. It is approved in writing by two-thirds of all presbyteries.
- c. It is agreed to and enacted by the next General Assembly.

Before the amendment can be proposed to the presbyteries, a committee of not less than fifteen persons shall be appointed to study the amendment and make recommendations. (64.02-64.022)

35. HOW CAN PARTS OF THE BOOK OF ORDER BE AMENDED?

Amendments to the Book of Order

1. Approval of the proposed amendment by the General Assembly.
2. The affirmative vote in writing of a majority of all the presbyteries.
3. Declaration of the amendment by the next General Assembly. (64.03-64.033)

36. IS THERE ANY VALUE IN A PRESBYTERY SENDING PROPOSED CHANGES IN THE BOOK OF ORDER TO OTHER PRESBYTERIES FOR THEIR SUPPORT PRIOR TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING AT WHICH THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS TO BE CONSIDERED?

Yes. The General Assembly is obligated to transmit to the presbyteries for their approval or disapproval any proposed amendment submitted to the same General Assembly by one-third of all presbyteries. (64.05)

37. WHAT CONSTITUTES A CHURCH STAFF?

The associate and assistant pastors together with its lay employees, both professional and non-professional shall constitute a church staff. (41.09)

38. WHO IS CONSIDERED THE HEAD OF A CHURCH STAFF?

The moderator of session shall be considered the head of staff. (41.09)

39. WHAT ARE CHAPTER 28 ORGANIZATIONS?

Chapter 28 refers to the chapter in the Book of Order which allows members of particular churches to associate themselves with other members of particular churches for the conduct of a special work for missionary or other benevolent purposes, or for the purpose of instruction in Christian nature. (58.01)

40. UNDER WHOSE DIRECTION DO THESE CHAPTER 28 ORGANIZATIONS OPERATE?

When such organizations exist within a particular church, they are under the jurisdiction of the session; when they cross congregational lines but are contained within a presbytery or synod, they are under the presbytery's or synod's jurisdiction; and when they cover territory greater than a synod, they shall be responsible to General Assembly. (58.02)

F O O T N O T E S

AND

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

FOOTNOTES

¹John H. Leith, Introduction To The Reformed Tradition. (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), P. 138.

²Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), III, 13.

³Theodore A. Gill, "Priesthood of Believers", Theology Today, XV (1958), 302.

⁴Robert C. Johnson, "Ordination and Ministry", Church and Society (May-June 1977), 40.

⁵Peter L. Kjeseth, "Baptism as Ordination", VIII Dialogue (Summer, 1969), 178.

⁶Ibid., P. 180.

⁷J. R. Crawford, "Calvinism and the Priesthood of All Believers", Scottish Journal of Theology, XXI (June 1966), 145.

⁸Ian Breward, "Ministerial And/Or Royal Priesthood?" Reformed Theological Review, XXIX, (April 1970), 1

⁹Crawford, pp 145-146

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 147-148

¹¹Ibid., p. 152

¹²Leith, p. 145

¹³Breward, p. 1

¹⁴Leith, p. 153

¹⁵Ibid., p. 153

¹⁶John T. McNeill, The History and Character of Calvinism. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 317.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 318

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 319.

²⁰Arthur C. Cochrane, "The Doctrine of the Call In The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1968-1969)" in Model For Ministry. (New York: Office of the General Assembly UPCUSA, 1970) p. 43.

²¹Ibid., p. 48.

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